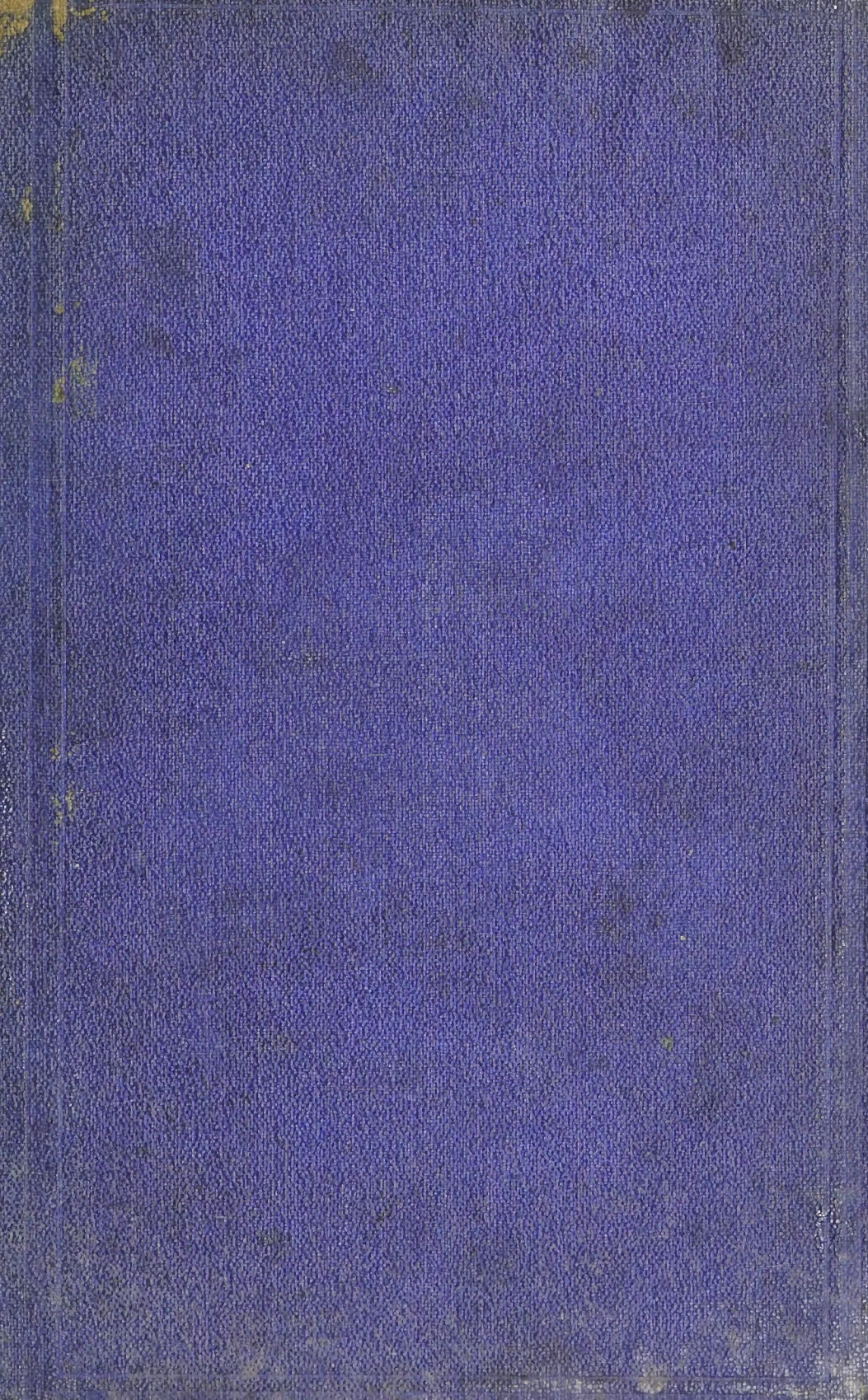




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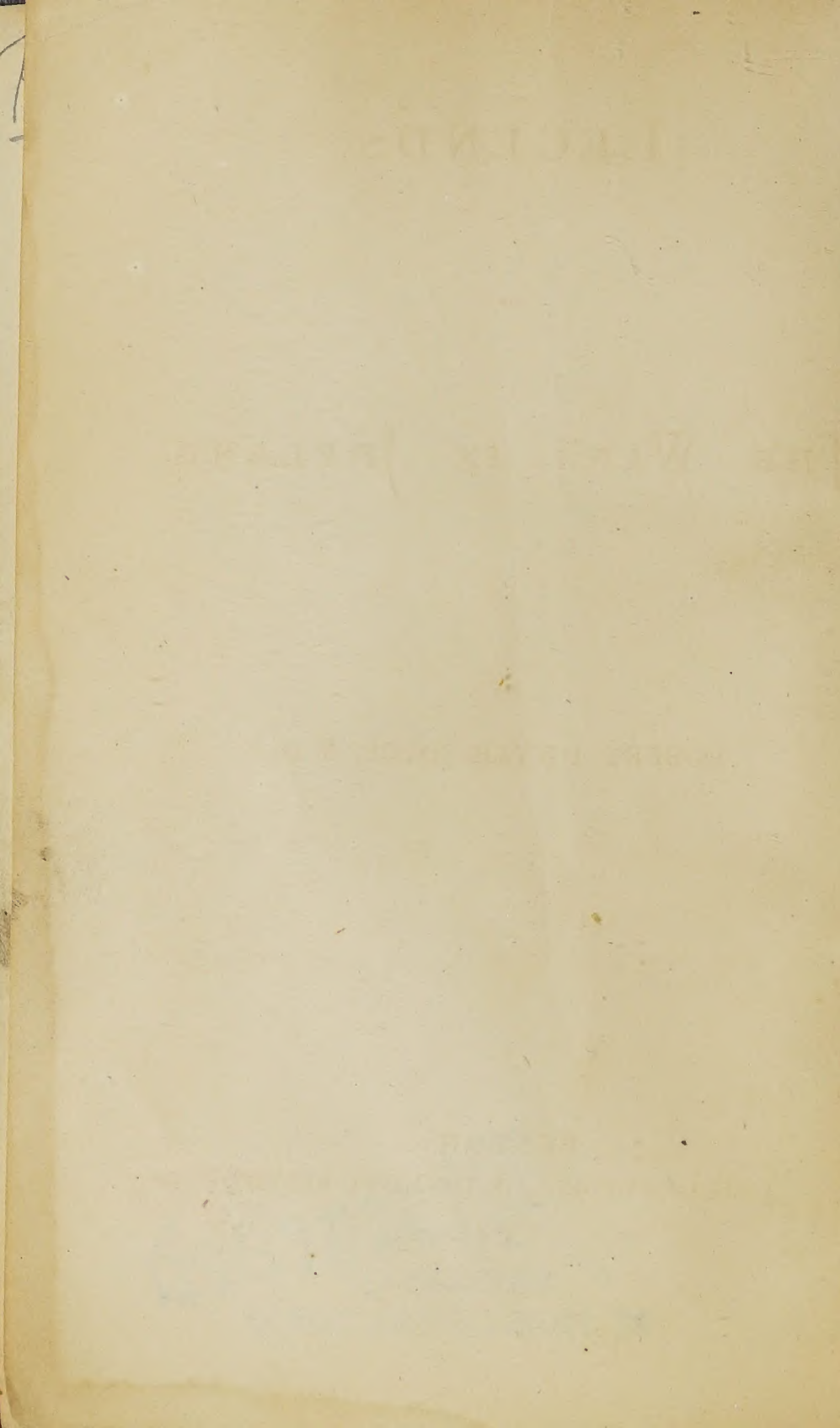
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BY

ROBERT DWYER JOYCE, M.D.

BOSTON:

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1868.

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To

JOHN SAVAGE, ESQ.

IN ADMIRATION OF HIS GENIUS AS A POET, AND IN TESTIMONY
OF HIS STERLING WORTH AS AN IRISHMAN
AND A PATRIOT,

THIS BOOK

IS DEDICATED BY HIS COUNTRYMAN AND FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.

Boston, November, 1867.

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A BATCH OF LEGENDS.

INTRODUCTORY.

TO the majority of people, a quiet seat by the fire-side, or an easy walk along the streets of one's native town or village, is often more agreeable than the toilsome rambles of the tourist. And yet in every district of our islands, amid the summits of their wild mountain ranges, and in the green glens and pastoral valleys of their lowlands, lie scenes which would amply repay the toil and trouble of the wanderer. The battered and gloomy castle, built with exact military judgment on its commanding position above the narrow pass, suggesting the bloody contentions that often raged beneath its walls; the ivied and time-worn ecclesiastical ruin amid the green pastures by the peaceful river, with its gray tombstones, drooping yew-trees, and sacred hawthorns; the ancient Danish encampment; the fairy-haunted rath; the small cyclopean oratories *

* Diminutive chapels, built of enormous blocks of stone, the ruins of which exist yet in many places in Ireland.

of the ancient missionaries who first brought the light of Christianity to our shores; the lonely Druidic cairns and sacrificial altars, — all these, with their wild and romantic legends, and the varied and beautiful scenery that surrounds them, would, in my opinion, afford as much pleasure to the traveller as the quaint towns and sluggish canals of Germany, the haekneyed precipices and waterfalls of Switzerland, or the brigand-peopled passes of Italy; for all which our modern exeursionists have such a strange and unpatriotic predilection.

To those whose easy inclinations preclude their taking on themselves the troubles of the tourist, who have no leisure for holiday exeursions, or who prefer migrating with the yearly tide of fashion to Continental lands for enjoyment of scenery and character, I offer these volumes of tales, with the humble hope that they may be the means of pleasantly passing away some of their dull hours. The legends and wild lore contained in them are the gleanings of the author, since his boyhood, in one of the most picturesque and beautiful portions of our island, — the result of his sojourn for many a summer month under canvas amid the high mountain ranges, and of his due attendance at wake and wedding, dance, Patron,* and fair, and merry-makings of every description, amongst the peasantry. Before concluding, however, it will not, I hope, be out of place to offer

* A meeting of the peasantry for prayer and merry-making around the ancient well or chapel dedicated to the *patron* saint of the locality.

a few remarks upon the peculiar kinds of traditions to be met with in these volumes, — traditions, many of which the author has found common to all the nations of middle and northern Europe, and which, therefore, cannot but prove interesting to the ethnologist and historian, no matter to what country he may belong.

The narratives handed down to us through the medium of oral traditions are of three kinds. The first includes all those wild, romantic, and strange legends, which, however they may be twisted, turned, or embellished, always carry with them a certain air of improbability and untruth. To this class belong the many stories relating to Theseus, Hercules, and the other Greek demi-gods; the romantic history of Romulus and Remus, and of many another Roman hero; numerous incidents in the wild legends of the Fenian warriors, and in the romances of King Arthur and his companions; many of the Sagas of the North: in other words, most part of the early history of the several countries to which these personages belonged, and of every other land whose origin looms out indistinctly beneath the dusky shadows of antiquity.

To the second class belong those circumstantial narratives which bear the impress of having been founded more intimately on certain facts, but which are yet unsupported by historical testimony. Of this class may be cited, as examples, the tales of battles, sieges, single combats, acts of piety, or deeds

of wickedness, told by the peasantry of our own islands, in connection with many a pass, castle, gray abbey, and hoary town, but for any corroboration of which we will look in vain to the meagre and scanty pages of our national histories. And yet if the latter were once properly written, and our old documents carefully examined, many of these tales would become proven history; for it is from such that a considerable part of even the authentic narrative of every country is made up. There are hundreds of incidents related in the pages of Thierry and Macaulay, which, before the days of these historians, were accepted on traditional authority only, but which now, after the careful investigations of these acute minds, have become matters of purely authentic history.

In the third class are included all those tales and legends, which, however wild and romantic, yet find, in some of their incidents at least, corroborating testimony in written history. Of these the historian will find many yet lingering among the peasantry; and, if he investigate them with the proper amount of acuteness, diligence, and erudition, they will add in no small degree to the liveliness and truthfulness of his pages. It is from such materials that Scott formed the subject-matter of his long series of novels, constructing, as he did, one bright and attractive panorama of the history of his native land.

Of each of the above classes I shall now proceed

to give an example, commencing with the first. In what follows, the reader, if he be versed in legendary lore, will recognize an Irish version of a legend known in parts of Germany, in Norway, in England, and in other European nations, in each of which countries, however, it seems to belong to no particular locality. In Ireland, nevertheless, the legend is fixed to a certain place, and always told without either variation of incident, or change of the characters involved in it. The reader, if he has ever heard it, can, however, judge for himself with regard to these points in

THE LEGEND OF THE SLEEPING MONKS.

About a mile to the south of Fethard, in the county of Tipperary, stand the ruins of the ancient Abbey of Kilmaclueh, near the banks of the Glashawling, one of the two streams that, after their junction, form the beautiful river Anner. In the early ages of Christianity, there presided over this holy establishment an abbot called Barrán Kief, renowned both for the extent of his learning and for the sanctity of his life. One bright summer day, Barrán Kief, with two of his monks, went out to walk in a green, forest-eland valley that lay beside the abbey wall, and, on reaching a certain lonely glade, sat down to rest. Around them, on every side, stretched the green, dreamy forest, covering height, hollow, and shore, and drawing its many-

tinted cincture of bright leaves around the sloping sides of Sliav-na-mon. After resting for some time, they were just thinking of rising, and proceeding on their way, when they heard a loud rustling of wings above them in the air; and, on looking upward, beheld a bird of beautiful form and resplendent plumage, hovering over the tops of the green trees, and looking down upon them at the same time with eyes whose intense rays seemed to pierce into their very souls. Hovering thus for a few moments, the bird at length commenced singing a long and varied strain of melody, which fell upon the ears of the wondering abbot and his monks beneath with a sweetness far surpassing any thing they had ever heard, and scarcely equalled by that glorious strain, which, in their dreams of heaven, always saluted them through its golden portals. Still the bird hovered above them, with its glittering wings outspread, singing its enchanting song, which at length seemed to fill valley and glade, and the deep, dreamy recesses of the forest, with a flood of ravishing and delightful melody. As the monks listened, they felt a rapturous and delicious drowsiness stealing over them, and at length fell into a sound and dreamless sleep.

The winds of a hundred summers had borne the odors of the flowers on their rejoicing wings through the dells of the merry forest, when, on the noontide of a sunny day, one of the monks awoke, and called out in a loud voice, "*Clushm ghlay!*"

i.e., "I hear a call!" But the bird was still floating above them on its glorious wings, and still singing its enrapturing song; and the monk, overpowered by the sweetness of the melody, lay back on the green forest grass, and fell asleep once more.

When the flowers of another hundred summers had bloomed and died along the lonely forest, the second monk awoke in the breezy noontide, and called out, "*Cadh ha urth?*" i.e., "What troubleth thee?" But the bird was still singing over him and his companions; and he had scarcely gotten one glimpse of the fresh blue sky, when he was lying upon his couch of green shamrocks, and asleep again.

The gray crags on the mountain-tops had been beaten by the winds and channelled by the successive rains of another hundred years, when Barrán Kief, the abbot himself, awoke, and called out in a loud voice, "*Shievun bouragh!*" i.e., "Thou troublest me!" And immediately his monks opened their eyes; and all three arose slowly to their feet, freed from their enchantment; for the bright-winged bird was gone, and the sweet melody was heard no more.

The blue summer sky was still the same above them: but, as Barrán Kief and his two monks looked around, they were stricken with a strange surprise; for, in the low-lying valley where once the marsh-flower bloomed, fields of yellowing corn now waved in the mild winds; and along the sides of the hills, and down in many a lonely dale, where once the great trees of the forest spread their giant arms, cot

and castle now gleamed in the sunshine, with herds of quiet cattle and many a flock of snowy sheep browsing contentedly around them. After standing for a time in mute wonderment, they proceeded towards the abbey, thinking still, in spite of themselves, that they had slept only during a few hours. On reaching the abbey, their astonishment was increased on finding it occupied by a strange abbot and strange monks, who all crossed themselves in wonder and awe at beholding the three 'strange visitants.

Barrán Kief went to the abbot, and asked him the reason of the change in such a short time. The abbot answered by inquiring who they were. Barrán Kief told him; on which he immediately proceeded to the books of the abbey, and found their names entered on them three hundred years before. On informing them of this, and that their brethren were, of course, all dead and gone for nearly the same period, they appeared suddenly to be aware of what had happened, and told the abbot the cause of their staying away.

"And now, O priest!" said Barrán Kief to the abbot, "we will celebrate one mass more for the glory of God before we depart."

The chapel was full of people; for it was Sunday. Barrán Kief arrayed himself in a vestment, and, assisted by his two monks, chanted the mass with a melodious sweetness that reminded the congregation of the delightful strains of Paradise. After return-

ing thanks to God, and blessing the people, Barrán Kief and his monks then fell down upon the altar, and were instantly reduced to three heaps of dust.

The reader will recognize the impossible in almost every portion of the above story; but, when we come to narrations of the second class, he will find them of a different character. In these, every circumstance falls in naturally: there is nothing impossible, nothing with even much of an air of improbability about it; and all are related with a minuteness regarding time, action, and locality, that can leave on the reader's mind very little doubt of their truth. I shall proceed at once to illustrate the stories of this class by

THE LEGEND OF THE CROSSED SWORDS.

In a certain mountainous district of Munster, there dwelt in the year 1745 a young gentleman by the name of Barry. The small property in his possession at that time was the remnant of a very considerable one which his grandfather had lost by his adherence to the cause of King James in the disastrous war of 1691. This young man's father and mother both died in the same year, — namely, 1728, — leaving him an orphan at the early age of five years. Under the care of his friends, and without the watchful eye of a mother to look after his early training, Bryan Barry grew up a wild and reckless boy, with strong passions and a hasty temper, yet

with a peculiarly warm heart, and a wonderful kindness of disposition towards any one whom he might consider for the moment as his friend. At the period in which this short tale opens, he had become a young man of fine proportions and very handsome features, but of reckless and irregular habits, and with a mind which had taken its tone from the stories he had heard of the acts and sentiments of his forefathers; becoming therefore imbued with the deepest feelings regarding the unfortunate race of the Stuarts, and filled with the wildest notions relative to their restoration to the British throne. He had, about a year previous to the above date, fallen in love with an extremely beautiful girl named Mary Fitzgerald, a few years younger than himself, and the daughter of an old gentleman who lived in his vicinity, who was very poor, having, like Bryan's grandfather, lost his property on account of his religion and political opinions. Bryan's love was favored by the young girl's father, and returned by Mary herself with the fondest affection and devotedness.

There was in the same neighborhood, and possessing the confiscated estates both of Bryan's grandfather and old Fitzgerald, a man named Ebenezer Stubbs, whose father had been a drummer in the army of King William. This man, who was at the time about thirty years of age, condescended to look with a favorable eye upon the handsome Mary Fitzgerald, and consequently hated, and was cordially hated in return by, his successful rival, Bryan Barry.

These two young men seldom met; but, whenever they did, it was with looks that boded no peaceful termination to their many causes of dispute: for Bryan, besides hating Ebenezer Stubbs on Mary Fitzgerald's account, considered him also as the usurper of his rightful patrimony, to which was added a hearty detestation on political grounds; and Ebenezer, for many similar reasons, lost no opportunity of showing his ill-will on every possible occasion.

Things went on thus for some time, when one day Mary Fitzgerald and Ebenezer Stubbs both disappeared from the neighborhood, no one knew whither. The grief and rage of old Fitzgerald and Bryan knew no bounds; and the sorrow of the majority of their neighbors was little less, for Mary was a universal favorite with every one who knew her. Search was made throughout every part of the surrounding country, but without avail. Day after day, Bryan, with the few young men that resided on his diminished property, and with many of the sons of those who once acknowledged the jurisdiction of his forefathers, was out amid the mountains, and far and near through the adjacent plains, in search of the lost Mary Fitzgerald; but every succeeding day saw them returning sad, weary, and unsuccessful. When somewhat more than a month had passed away, and still no tidings of the lost one came to comfort the bereaved father and anxious lover, a report began to circulate amongst the people around,

that Ebenezer Stubbs and Mary Fitzgerald were both living happily as man and wife in the north of England. This rumor at length reached the ears of old Fitzgerald and of Bryan; and the latter, having lost all hope, and mad with disappointment and despair, turned his thoughts to a project on which he had been meditating occasionally for some time previously. His was not the temperament to brook delay after once resolving to act; and he soon carried out his project.

Our readers will recollect, that, in the above year, "bonnie Prince Charlie" made his final attempt to regain the throne of his fathers by raising his standard in the Highlands of Scotland. In Ireland, and particularly in its southern and western counties, this attempt was looked upon by the inhabitants with eager eyes. The advent of the prince was hoped for anxiously by the peasantry, and sung by their wandering poets; and when he did at last raise his banner in the Highlands, many young men from Ireland crossed the water, and joined his ranks. Bryan was among the latter. With about a dozen young men, — his own tenantry, — he made his way to the Shannon shore; and, seizing a small schooner near Ballybunnion, he sailed down the river, turned northward, and rounded the coast of Ireland, till he reached a secluded bay on the western shore of Scotland, whence, after abandoning the boat, he and his companions crossed the country, and at length succeeded in joining the army of the Pretender.

After escaping many dangers, and losing most of his companions, he stood at length by the side of the young prince, and fought bravely for his cause in the disastrous battle of Culloden; and when the day was lost, and the hopes of the Pretender were shattered forever, he again escaped, and contrived, through innumerable perils and hardships, to reach his native land once more.

It was a dark December night when Bryan sat, sad and weary, by the fireside of an old farmer who dwelt upon the skirts of the property that a few months before he could call his own, but which now, during his absence, had fallen into the possession of his mortal enemy, Ebenezer Stubbs. From this old farmer, Bryan learned the secret of Mary Fitzgerald's disappearance, and other facts that made him burn for vengeance upon his enemy. Mary had been carried off by Ebenezer Stubbs, and confined in Limerick, in the house of one of his accomplices; while Ebenezer himself, after taking up his residence in London, had caused some of his worthy associates to circulate the report of his marriage at home, thus getting rid of Bryan in the manner related. Ebenezer, after receiving the news of Bryan's reckless proceedings, caused Mary Fitzgerald to be sent back to her father, and soon returned to the neighborhood himself, where as a magistrate, and having the terrible penal laws of those times to back him, he soon made himself the terror of the poor peasantry, and even of the higher classes of the Roman

Catholics around. Amongst the rest, he had compelled old Fitzgerald to consent to his marriage with Mary; and Bryan learned, in despair and grief, that the ceremony was to take place in a few days.

On the morning of the day before that fixed for the marriage, Ebenezer received a message to this effect, — that, should he go on the same evening to the old churchyard outside the wall of his demesne, he would meet a person who would give him some information of vital importance to himself and Mary Fitzgerald. This message Ebenezer cautiously pondered over for some time; but at length he resolved to go. Late in the evening, having armed himself with the long, iron-hilted sword his father had worn in the wars, Ebenezer proceeded to the lonely churchyard, and there, on turning round a corner of the dilapidated wall, he beheld confronting him the man whom he most feared and hated, Bryan Barry.

“Draw!” exclaimed Bryan; “you false hound, draw, and defend your vile carcass; for I swear that only one of us shall leave this spot a living man!”

“I am glad,” replied Ebenezer, who was not at all deficient in courage, “that it has come to this. You beggarly outlaw!” added he with a sneer, at the same time drawing his weapon, “I will show you the power of the law, as well as the power of my own hatred and this good sword. Take that!” and he made a furious lunge at Bryan, who,

after a dexterous parry, slightly grazed Ebenezer's shoulder in return.

It is unnecessary to describe the particulars of that vengeful and long-protracted struggle; but, when the cold light of sunset fell upon the mouldering wall of the solitary ruin, Bryan Barry and Ebenezer Stubbs were found lying side by side, pierced by many deep wounds, and stone dead, beneath the branches of the ancient ash-tree under which they fought. On hearing the news, Mary Fitzgerald received a shock from which her broken constitution never rallied. She pined slowly away, and died ere the commencement of the ensuing summer; and her father soon followed her to the grave. The bodies of the two mortal foes were buried where they fell, outside the wall of the ruin, and a stone, which an itinerant mason marked with the semblances of the two swords crossed, in token of their last struggle, placed over their blood-stained resting-place.

Now, for authenticating this narrative. Beside the same churchyard, and beneath a very ancient ash-tree, was to be seen some few years ago — perhaps it may be seen there still — a tall, green flagstone standing on end, on removing the moss from the eastern face of which, the rude figures of two swords, placed crosswise, might be easily discerned; and, if the curious traveller inquired concerning the history of that strange symbol, he would hear from any of the surrounding peasantry a narrative the

same in substance as the foregoing. But what makes the story still more authentic is this. On the side of the little hill that rises over the ancient churchyard, lives a farmer, — now about ninety years of age, — who states that he often heard his grandfather relating the story, and every particular of the combat; he (that is the grandfather), then a boy, having witnessed the whole scene through a narrow window of the old ruin, to which he had climbed in search of a jackdaw's nest, and behind which he had lain all the time, concealed in the clustering ivy.

We now come to narratives of the third class; namely, those in which one or more, or even all the circumstances related in them, can be confirmed by written history: and I shall illustrate them briefly for the present by

THE LEGEND OF THE SAXON'S HOLLOW.

About a dozen years before Cromwell came into Ireland, there dwelt an old chief, named De Prendergast, far up amid the eastern summits of the Cnocmel-down Mountains, in a castle called Crogh-Cluny, the ruins of which may still be seen by the traveller, should he pass through that wild region. This castle stood upon a projecting limestone rock, over a deep hollow, through which wound the only road then available for the passage of troops from the

county of Tipperary into those of Waterford and Cork. Besides this castle, the chief possessed others down in the lowlands, the strongest of which was that of Newcastle, upon the banks of the Suir. The old chief was blind with age, but still of an energetic character, and had living with him at that time, in Crogh-Cluny, an orphan niece and his two sons. One wild winter's day, a mounted messenger, or *easlach*, rode into Crogh-Cluny, from James Fitzgerald, Lord of Modeligo, near the Blackwater, with the intelligence that Murrough O'Brien, Earl of Inchiquin, after despoiling all the eastern baronies of the county of Cork, and the adjoining districts of Waterford, was to march with his plunder by Crogh-Cluny into Tipperary. The *easlach* also stated, that, in case De Prendergast would aid the Lord of Modeligo, the latter, with all his clan, would attack Murrough O'Brien in his passage through the hollow near the castle, and endeavor to obtain possession of the spoil. De Prendergast agreed to the proposition, and the courier departed.

On the day that the Earl of Inchiquin marched across the mountains, the confederated clans of the two chiefs hovered on his track, and, as he wound through the hollow beside Crogh-Cluny, attacked him, according to their agreement, gained possession of the spoil, and cut his army to pieces; the earl himself only escaping by the fleetness of his horse, which bore him, with one astonishing bound, across a deep and narrow glen, running along the northern

side of the hollow, and called to this day, by the peasantry of that highland region, *Leam-an-Earla*, or the Earl's Leap; the steep valley itself being designated *Lag-na-Sassenagh*, or the Saxon's Hollow, in commemoration of the battle, and of the number of Murrogh O'Brien's soldiers slain within it.

In the division of the spoil, the two clans quarrelled; and another and equally bloody battle would have been fought in the hollow, had not the matter been left to the arbitration of single combat between the eldest son of De Prendergast and the Lord of Modeligo. The duel was to be fought in full armor, and with sword and dagger, by the two young chiefs. On the day appointed, they met, in the presence of a stipulated number of each clan, within the lists on the bank of the Suir, near Newcastle, the spot agreed upon for the combat. It was a tough and bloody duel; but at length young De Prendergast fell, mortally wounded, beneath the more fortunate sword of the young Lord of Modeligo.

The old chief, in the mean time, was sitting in his castle of Crogh-Cluny, anxiously awaiting news of the combat and of the fate of his son. At length his niece, who was stationed beside a window of the apartment, heard the clatter of hoofs coming up the rocky *ballagh*, or road, that led beside the castle, and, on looking out, found that it was the young Lord of Modeligo returning from the fight. The moment the latter beheld the young lady, he reined in his horse opposite the window, —

“Go!” exclaimed he in a vaunting tone, “and tell the old wolf inside that I have killed his best cub in to-day’s combat.”

The young girl repeated the words to the blind old chief inside.

“Stay!” said the latter, rising from his chair, taking down a loaded *musketoon* from the mantel-piece, and resting it on the sill of a loophole that commanded the spot where the Lord of Modeligo still sat motionless upon his horse, — “Stay, girl! Now ask him to say over the same words again!”

The young girl did as she was commanded; but, ere the words were half repeated, a bullet from the *musketoon* of the blind chief, who regulated his aim by the direction of the voice, passed through the brain of the young Lord of Modeligo, and stretched him a corpse in the midst of his terrified followers, on that steep road beneath the strong walls of Crogh-Cluny.

The above is the substance, neither more nor less, of what I heard a few years ago from a venerable old farmer who resides near the ruins of Clogh-Cluny Castle. On referring to Carte’s Life of Ormond, and other histories, the reader will find that Murrough O’Brien, Earl of Inchiguin, did actually pass down those mountains, with spoil from parts of Cork and Waterford, in the year indicated by the legend; namely, 1641. The histories also state that Murrough sent word to Captains Peasly and Browne, who commanded at that time in Tipperary, to have

his passage cleared for the transportation of the spoil, and that, on these officers neglecting to do so, "he was sorely troubled by the mountaineers." No doubt but he was. For when Carte and other partisan writers admit so much, and with the evidence of the names of the localities before us, we may conclude that Murrough the Burner — as he was called from his savage cruelties, and his equally savage marauders — got a bloody and signal overthrow from the two brave clans; and we may also very legitimately infer that most, if not all, of the other incidents of the legend are true.

I shall now introduce my readers to a country acquaintance of mine, whose accurate knowledge I have often put to the test in tracing legends to their source, as well as in divesting them of the extraneous incidents often tacked to them by the peasantry during the lapse of time.

Bob Barry is a doctor of the old school, and looks down with sovereign contempt on many modern surgical and medical theories. According to his own words, he believes what he likes, and nothing more. And yet Dr. Bob is a successful practitioner. Witness his beautiful house and grounds, and the amount of money he is said to have in the funds. He imagines himself that a deep knowledge of the ancient classics is more his *forte* than a knowledge of the healing art; and certainly he loses no opportunity of demonstrating his convic-

tion by interlarding his conversations with the most astonishingly unique and erudite phrases and aphorisms from the forgotten works of many a Greek and Latin sage. But, be this as it may, I know, and all his acquaintances are fully convinced of the same, that his *forte* lies in a very comprehensive knowledge of Irish history, Irish character, topography, and legends.

Dr. Bob and I sat opposite each other before a merry turf-fire. I had some freshly-written manuscript before me. For some time, he sat regarding me with sagacious scrutiny, as if making a diagnosis respecting the state of my mental faculties.

"At the old work?" pronounced he at last.

"Yes," answered I, "I have here some legends whose truth I am endeavoring to verify by oral and historical testimony."

"A laborious task you have taken on yourself," pursued he. "I see," he continued, referring to a former conversation of ours, "that there is one class which you call the impossible legend, of any example of which you can give no verification. This is a class, however, in which are contained greater numbers than in all the others put together. It is a class common to all time and to all nations, particularly to the Greeks. Some of them are very beautiful. Do you remember the myth on which Euripides has founded his play of 'Alcestis'?"

"If I do," answered I, "my idea of it is somewhat shadowy. It is a long time since I read it."

“Well,” continued Dr. Bob, “there was a king called Admetus, who once treated Apollo hospitably. Admetus, when he found out who Apollo was, and saw him about to take his departure for Olympus, asked the god to confer immortality upon him. Apollo answered, that, if he (Admetus) could get a substitute to die for him, his life might be prolonged. Upon this, Admetus applied to his parents, who were old and infirm: but, as age advances, the love of life seems to increase; and both father and mother refused to die for him. Admetus then applies to his wife, the young and beautiful Alcestis, who cheerfully yields up life for the love of her husband, and thereupon dies. Then follows the funeral-feast. Hercules, returning from one of his labors, comes to the palace. He enters, and inquires the cause of the mourning. On hearing the story, he immediately makes an excursion to the infernal regions, where he finds Alcestis, and brings her back, veiled. He carries her into the palace, where Admetus now sits, regretting what he had done, and mourning for his beautiful and faithful wife. Hercules, to test his fidelity, covers Alcestis more closely with her veil, and says that he has brought another and more beautiful wife to Admetus. But the sorrowful Admetus answers, that he shall never more marry, and that he shall soon follow across the gloomy Styx her he loved so well. Whereupon Hercules lifts the veil, discloses Alcestis restored to mortal life; and all ends happily.

But," continued the doctor, after a learned dissertation on the beauties of the Greek myth, "did it ever strike you how it is that Hercules, who, most probably, was a real personage, had a number of achievements attributed to him impossible to be performed by any single hero, no matter how strong and valorous?"

"For the same reason," answered I, "that, to bring matters nearer home, Fionn, Cuchullin, Conal Cear-nagh, Curigh, the son of Daire, and the other great warriors of early Irish history, are represented as performing a number of actions equally impossible. The magnified actions of a number of heroes were, in the lapse of time, confounded by the poets and Shanachies with those of one man, and thereby attributed to him."

"It is so," said Dr. Bob, with an approving glance. "But I see the name of Saint Patrick on your manuscript. To what class does your legend belong?"

"To the first," I answered; "for several of the incidents in it, as you will see, are impossible. Yet, as it illustrates and accounts for a universal custom at Irish funerals, it is well worth preserving." And I read for him the following legend:—

THE CROSS ON THE GRAVE.

Saint Patrick had a servant named Duan the Slender. The duty of this servant was to supply fuel for the household of the saint. One chilly

winter day, he went with his axe into the forest to cut timber; and, on arriving at a weird and lonely glade, he saw an aged rowan tree, or mountain-ash, upon its border. He immediately commenced to cut it down; but his axe was very blunt from constant use, and his work, therefore, progressed very slowly. The morning wore away, and noon came; but as yet he had scarcely cut half a dozen inches into the stubborn trunk of the tree: so he sat down at length beside it, weary and sad, and began to complain, rather loudly, of the poverty that prevented him from buying a new and sharper axe. As he sat thus, a voice behind him called out, "Duan the Slender!" three times.

Duan the Slender turned quickly round, and beheld, standing near, two young and handsome men of rather diminutive stature. They had long, flowing, lustrous hair, and dark, piercing eyes, that seemed to penetrate to the very soul of Duan the Slender, and were clad in luminous green garments. Duan arose, and looked upon them wonderingly.

"Have you called me?" he said at length, half afraid, on account of their strange looks and apparel.

"Yes," answered one: "we have called you, that we may do you a service if you are willing. Your axe is very blunt, and your labor is heavy."

"It is," answered Duan, catching up his axe, and looking disdainfully at its edge.

"We will give you a new one, that will cut down

the whole forest in a day, if you comply with our request," said the young man.

"I will do any thing," answered Duan, "to get rid of this useless and ancient axe, and get a new and sharp one."

"It is well," returned the young man. "Here is our request. After the mass, when Saint Patrick turns round to bless the people, ask him who are they that can never share in the light of the gospel, that can never go to heaven."

"I will do it," said Duan the Slender. "And now give me the axe; for I must finish my work and begone."

They went into the forest, and returned with a sharp axe of gleaming blue steel. This they gave to Duan, saying that they would meet him in the same place on the morrow for his answer. They then departed; and Duan the Slender cut down the tree without trouble, and took some of its dryest branches home.

Early next morning, when the saint, after celebrating the holy mass, turned round to bless the people, Duan the Slender arose, and called out in a loud voice, "Who are they in this land that shall never enter heaven?"

"'Duine Airiachs,' or the people of air," answered the saint. "But, O Duan the Slender! why have you asked me this question, that will bring sure and sudden destruction upon you?"

Duan waited till mass was quite over, and the

saint had entered his dwelling. He then told Saint Patrick what had happened, and the promise he had made to the two strange young men. "It is, I fear, a fatal promise for you," said the saint; "for, when they hear the woful answer from your lips, you will surely be torn to pieces. But, however, there is one plan by which you may escape their fury. You must perform your promise; but, when you go out into the forest-glade, there dig a grave, and place yourself in it, with the mattock and shovel placed over you in the shape of our holy symbol, the cross. Thus await their coming, give them their answer; and, with the blessed sign above you, they cannot do you harm."

Duan the Slender took his mattock and shovel, went out to the weird glade in the forest, and did exactly as the saint had directed. He had scarcely lain himself down in the grave, with the mattock and shovel placed crosswise above him, when he heard the patter of innumerable feet sounding through the forest, and, on looking up, beheld his place of refuge surrounded by a countless crowd of the same beings he had seen on the previous day. The two young men who had given him the axe stood on the edge of the grave, and, after gazing on him for some time, asked him for his answer.

"I asked the saint," exclaimed Duan the Slender; "and he said that the 'Duine Airiachs' were they that should never enter the kingdom of heaven."

Immediately a wild yell of fury and sorrow arose

from the great crowd. They pressed eloser round, and attempted to drag Duan from the grave ; but the blessed sign prevented them. At length, when they found their vengeful efforts unavailing, they turned, and, with another shrill and wailing cry of sorrow and baffled anger, disappeared amid the lonely recesses of the forest. Duan the Slender left his place of refuge, and went safely back to his holy master ; but, ever since, the people of Ireland, at the burial of their friends, make, with mattock and shovel, Saint Patrick's cross above the grave.

"It is the custom, certainly," said Dr. Bob. "It is curious that a similar story, differing only in a few slight details, is related in 'The Tripartite Life of Saint Patrick.' But I see that you are eager to commence a legend, I suppose belonging to your second class. Let us have it, then, by all means."

"Yes," I said. "Here is a legend, which, I think, can be established as a true one, by oral and living testimony ;" and I read for the erudite son of Galen the

SHIRT OF MAIL.

In a valley, amid that wild range of mountains that separates the plain of Limerick from the northern confines of Cork, there grew, some years ago, an aged hawthorn, called by the surrounding peasantry *Sgach na Three Theige*, or the Bush of the Three Timothies. The reader, if he refer to another tale contained in this volume, will see

therein how the tree got its remarkable name; but with that we have nothing to do at present. This tree seemed to have stood there for centuries. It was, however, cut down, to the great rage of the inhabitants of the valley in which it grew, by a thieving peasant of a remote hamlet, who made the boxes of a number of cart-wheels from its trunk. It stood upon a level tongue of land that projected between the meeting of two mountain streams.

Many centuries ago, there dwelt an old chief upon the neighboring plain of Cork, in a castle whose ruins may yet be seen rising in stern grandeur from a green knoll at the southern foot of the mountain-range. This chief had an only and beautiful daughter, whose hand was sought in marriage by several of the young knights around. There were two competitors, however, who eclipsed the claims of all the rest. One of them was Sir Henry de Rupe, belonging to the powerful house of Fermoy; and the other Sir John Fitzgerald, a scion of the still more powerful house of Desmond.

The rivalry of these two young knights soon merged into hate and bitterness. At a wassail in the castle of the old chief, they met one night. They quarrelled; and, ere the wassail was over, one challenged the other to settle their claims by the then usual ordeal of single combat. The day and place were appointed, to the great delight, according to the legend, of the old chief, who said that he would cheerfully give his daughter to the conqueror.

Some short time, however, before the day appointed, the two young knights met, accidentally and alone, on the green tongue of land mentioned above. Again they quarrelled; and finally agreed then and there, without witnesses, to settle their differences in mortal combat; and that the vanquished should be buried where he fell.

It was a long and terrible struggle. Sir Henry de Rupe conquered, slew his rival, and, according to the previous agreement, buried him in his armor on the scene of the combat.

It is now nearly twenty years since a young man of one of the mountain villages dreamt that there was a great treasure buried beneath the roots of the white-thorn of the Three Timothies, which grew on the identical spot indicated by the legend. He and some of his companions went one night, and dug beneath the aged tree. After excavating to a depth of about three feet, they discovered a heavy lump of steel. They dug further; but finally their search for the treasure proved unsuccessful. This lump of steel remained in the village for a long time, and was a great curiosity. It was made up of a number of rings, all stuck together by rust: it was, in fact, a shirt of chain mail. It is a great pity that it was not preserved, and sent to the Royal Irish Academy, where there is, I believe, but another similar specimen; but the curious people who went to see it each took away a ring or two, and thus it ultimately disappeared.

"This, I think," said I to the doctor, "is sufficient proof of the truth of the legend."

Dr. Bob looked logical and unconvinced for some time, but at last admitted that it was.

"And now," he said, "for your legend of the third class."

"Here goes," said I; "and it will be a short one." So I read for him, as follows, the legend of

BLACK HUGH OF DARA AND DONAL O'SULLIVAN.

Hugh Dhuv Condon had once been the owner of one of those strong square castles, or bawns, so many of whose ruins may still be seen adding to the picturesqueness of quiet valley, gentle slope, craggy gorge, or solitary rock, throughout the south of Ireland. During the last Desmond war, he had fought against the forces of Queen Elizabeth, and shared in the hardships and reverses of his master, the unfortunate Earl James. Thus it happened that when the war came to a termination in his neighborhood, and the English had taken the Earl of Desmond prisoner, Hugh Condon's border tower was burned, and razed to the ground, by the cruel myrmidons of the government, his wife and children slain, and he himself, of course, outlawed.

Hugh Condon swore an oath that he would have vengeance. He kept his vow. There was a pass near the cave in which he lived with his followers, through which detachments of the English troops

had to pass while marching from their Limerick garrisons to those of Cork. Often had Hugh and his fierce followers fallen upon these detachments, and frequently had they conquered, and taken summary vengeance for their wrongs. It was by such exploits that Hugh of Dara's name gradually went abroad as that of the most celebrated outlaw in Munster. The mountains in which his cave was situated were at that time thickly clothed with woods, — offshoots from the great forest of Kylemore, — which extended along the steep slopes, branched higher still up the rocky and savage gorges, and even clothed parts of the bleak and desolate expanses of bog that stretched often from summit to summit between those wild hills. A small *ballagh*, or bridle-path, led across this chain of hills, leading in a straight course from the plain of Cork into that of Limerick.

Along the aforesaid *ballagh*, Hugh Condon was riding one wintry day, about a year and a half after the capture of the Earl of Desmond by the English. He had not ridden far when he perceived a plumed horseman, clad in splendid armor, galloping towards him from a far turning of the bridle-way. On either side of Hugh, there was a deep, marshy bog, so that the stranger could not pass, unless by the path. Now, Hugh of Dara, by the strange horseman's splendid attire, judged him to be an Englishman, and determined not to let him pass without a word and a blow.

"Draw!" exclaimed Hugh, as the stranger rode up. "I am lord of those mountains, and you shall not pass the way."

"By my good faith!" answered the stranger, reining in his steed; "but this is surly cheer to meet on such a wild day. Let me pass, good fellow, and you will not repent of your courtesy."

"No!" answered Hugh stubbornly; for he now thought really that the stranger was an Englishman. "You shall not pass, unless over my body!"

"Then, be it so!" exclaimed the strange horseman; and, with that, he dashed, sword in hand, at Hugh. But Hugh was a stout soldier, and held his ground so as to hinder the stranger from passing on.

"I warn you to let me pass!" exclaimed the latter once more, as he prepared for a more vigorous attack upon Hugh. "Look down the mountain-slopes to the south, and you will see those approaching before whom, when they come up, you will assuredly be hewn in pieces."

Hugh looked down the mountains, and beheld a small army marching across them from the plain.

"Who are you?" he asked at length, still, however, keeping steadily on his guard.

"I am Donal, Prince of Beare," answered the stranger; "and now let me pass, for I must find a camping-place for my followers."

Of course, Black Hugh of Dara not only let him pass, but brought him and his followers to a safe and

sheltered valley, by the side of Ardpatrik Hill, on the verge of the Limerick plain. Here they rested for three days. On the second day, Black Hugh of Dara gave them notice that they were to be attacked the following night by the Barrys, the Roches, and part of the English garrison of Mallow; and showed Donal of Beare a pass in which it would be easy to defeat his foes as they marched through. Donal O'Sullivan placed an ambuscade in the pass, and that night defeated his enemies with great slaughter. The peasantry who tell the legend point out the different localities mentioned in it, and add that Black Hugh of Dara followed the fortunes of Donal, Prince of Beare, in his gallant retreat to the north.

"It is an interesting thing," said Dr. Bob, "to find out even one of the stages of that memorable retreat, unequalled by any thing in ancient times, except the exploit of Xenophon and the Ten Thousand."

"It is," answered I; "and I have historical testimony as to the truth of part of the legend, at least; for it is mentioned in the 'Annals of the Four Masters,' that, during his flight to the north, Donal O'Sullivan, Prince of Beare, and his forces, encamped for some days by the Hill of Ardpatrik."

"No matter," exclaimed my companion excitedly, "fill your glass, and we will drink a toast."

I filled my glass; and there and then Dr. Bob Barry and I drank a flowing bumper to the memory of Donal of Beare, one of the bravest chiefs that ever drew sword beneath the fair hills of holy Ireland.





THE MASTER OF LISFINRY.

CHAPTER I.

ONE sweet June evening in the year 1579, the sentinels were ranged for watch and ward along the walls of Youghal; some leaning in an indolent and listless manner against the parapets and over the breastworks, others walking quietly to and fro, their buff-coats and armor half unbraced, and their long halberds glittering in the soft and merry sunshine. Beneath them lay the town with its strong, stern-looking castles, its quaint houses, with their pointed gables and antique doorways, its inhabitants half astir and listless too; for the quiet and warmth of the evening seemed to have as much effect on their movements and proceedings as it had upon those of the lazy soldiers upon the castle-tops and the walls. Southward spread out the blue, bright, and placid ocean, with a few sails in the harbor and in the offing; while, in a landward direction, the scenery extended itself into a broad

panorama of mountain, forest, and river, enlivened at intervals by gray and stately castles, each of which sent up its column of blue smoke into the calm, amber-colored sky.

On the northern ramparts, two sentinels were sitting, engaged in a quiet, half-dreamy conversation. They were both aged men. Their faces were turned to a dark bronze by constant exposure to both war and weather; but their bodies seemed still strong and stalwart, stronger, perhaps, and more capable of endurance, than when they first donned the helmet and sword, and took to the wandering trade of a soldier.

"Gurth of the Stream," said one, addressing his comrade, "I would we were both back again in our own blithe braes of Northumberland! I do not like this cooped life of ours, ever within stone walls, and waiting, always waiting, for the war-cry of the Irishry, that has not sounded on my ears since last Christmas-tide."

"Ralph Goodwyn," said Gurth, "from my heart I wish your wish. By the axe of my father, but it is enough to sour a man's blood in his veins to sit here, like a Yorkshire churn when its last butter is made, and never find any one thing for our hands to do, save sharpening our swords, that, God wot, are sharp enough for the work they have to do, and brightening our tasses and breastplates! Ah! those were merry days when we chased the deer together through the South Forest, and courted the blithe lasses by the Brig o' Reed."

"Blithe they were, and merry," rejoined Ralph Goodwyn. "Dost thou remember the day I fought Simon o' the Mill for the love of bonnie Alice of Elsdon?"

"A bright day it was, Ralph, but a black day for Simon o' the Mill."

"But it was near being the same for me, too, Gurth. When our good swords were shivered, and we went to work with the dirk, he got his point between the bars of my basnet, and gave me this;" and he pointed to a great scar across his face. "He fell, Gurth, and I had no rival for the love of my bonnie Alice. But, alas! it was too short, and she died, poor thing, ere the autumn-tide; and ever since I am a wanderer, and a man of the sword, like yourself."

"As for me," rejoined Gurth, "I took to the plume, and followed the tuck of drum, to feed my own wild fancy. I could never love maiden like you, Ralph, though the gleam and the blink of her eye were as bright as the steel of my dirk. But what is that?" he exclaimed, starting to his feet, and pointing northward to the skirt of the ancient forest that stretched along the bank of the Blackwater. Both looked in the direction to which he pointed, and beheld the glitter of swords and spears and the waving of plumes, and the flutter of advancing banners, as if a great army were approaching. And so it was. Even as they looked, a large body of light-armed footmen, or *kerne*, emerged from the wood, and formed in a body

on the clear plain outside. Long lines of horsemen followed, with fluttering banners and glistening armor, then other bodies of foot; then, again, horsemen, falling into regular positions as they came, until at length a large and numerous army lay formed before them on the plain, but far beyond the range of the light cannon upon the walls.

"Fire the alarm-gun," cried Ralph, "and call up the captain of the guard!"

A small falconet on one of the towers was fired by Gurth; and, in a few moments, the ramparts were thronged with men, the different officers running to and fro, giving their commands, and putting the now any thing but lazy soldiers into their proper order.

"Ho!" exclaimed the captain of the guard, a tall, stern-looking soldier, when the proper arrangements were made, "they seem still unwarlike in their intentions; for here comes a courier with a flag of truce, and, God wot, I suppose a civil message. Better had they thrown us the gage of battle at once in the shape of a pill of iron from the mouth of one of their falconets, than come thus with a white 'kerchief on the point of a lance; for we can hold no parley and have no truce with those wild Irishry!"

As he spoke, a knight from the Irish forces rode forth, accompanied by a mounted gilly, or henchman, and came at an easy gallop towards the walls. He was clad in a suit of bright armor, his helmet being surmounted by a tall red plume; and in his hand he held his long spear aloft, on the point of

which fluttered a white 'kerchief, like a small banneret. He was soon within speaking-distance of the walls, and, reining in his steed, stood, like a tall statue of iron, motionless, his gilly close behind him, looking with fierce eyes upon the formidable array of men-at-arms upon the walls. In a few moments, he raised his visor, and with a voice loud and clear as the tones of a trumpet, addressed himself to those whom he considered to be the leaders of the town.

“Vassals of the Red Queen,” he said, “the high and mighty prince, John of Desmond, sends ye greeting by me, James, Knight of Lisfinry, and bids ye to depart in peace from his town of Youghal. He gives ye two days to embark. If, at the end of that time, ye still remain, he considers ye are his, for death or life, with your possessions in the town. God and the right!”

“Give him,” exclaimed the commander of the town, who was now standing on the rampart, “give him one sample of the medicine that the Red Queen, as he calls her, sends to her rebellious subjects, to cure their contumacy. Gurth of the Stream, point that falconet, and shoot him down!”

Gurth was ready at the word; and the sound of the falconet's explosion was scarcely ringing in their ears, when they beheld the Knight of the Red Plume stretched upon the plain. He was not hurt, however, though the ball had killed his horse, which, falling, brought the knight to the ground, partly

under him. The gilly was determined not to remain idle, however. It was amazing to see with what dexterity he extricated his master from beneath the body of the dead steed, and mounted him on his own; then, as the knight spurred away, half-stunned by the fall, the faithful attendant ran by his side with the agility of a deer, until they reached the halting-place of their brothers-in-arms.

Night had fallen upon the town; but the sentinels were still watchful upon the walls. They could distinguish no indications of a stir among the Irish, save that, ever and anon, a slight murmur arose outside, at some distance from where they walked their rounds; and black masses, which they took for the waving shadows of trees, appeared to move to and fro in every direction, amid the copse-wood and scattered forest. The morning soon explained what these black, moving masses indicated. The sun had scarcely risen, when the ramparts were again thronged with officers and men-at-arms; and, looking out, they beheld huge piles of earth and brushwood, behind which the Irish forces lay crouched, secure themselves, but close enough, and in positions, to pick off with musketry the defenders of the walls. No horses could be seen, — they were picketed in the thick forest behind; but here and there the mouths of cannons protruded from the brushwood and clayey ramparts, while the shock heads of the fierce array outside, with a gleaming helmet occasionally amongst them, might be seen popping up at inter-

vals from the covert, and examining the fortifications. All at once a wild war-cry arose which seemed to proceed from every part of the forest. This was followed by the rolling cracks of the match-locks and musketoons, and the loud roar of cannon, which, with the answering explosions from the walls, made a din that soon woke the town, and struck terror into its inhabitants. All day the firing continued with considerable loss to the besieged. In several places, the walls were partially breached; but, in one part, the foundations seemed to have entirely given way, a few perches of it lying almost level with the ground. Up this breach, on the evening of that day, a large body of the Irish were rushing, headed by the knights and gentlemen who composed the officers of Desmond's army. They were met gallantly by the English, and driven back almost to their intrenchments. On they came again, however, crowding up the breach like the waves of the sea. To and fro swayed the combatants, re-enforcements pouring in to each side, until the whole battle seemed concentrated round that breach. The Irish were again beginning to waver, when a cry arose among them, "Crom Aboo! Follow the Red Feather! Hurrah for Lisfinry and the Red Plume!" and, looking up, they saw the Master of Lisfinry far above them at one side; his long plume waving, and his heavy sword clutched in both hands, as he hacked and hewed at the English who surrounded him. A simultaneous[†] rush was made by the Irish towards

this point ; and the English, by absolute dint of pressure, body to body, were at length forced to give way, and retreat from the walls, the Irish following with a wild shout into the town. At this moment, Gurth of the Stream, who had not abandoned his beloved gun till the last extremity, leaped, with a heavy battle-axe in his hand, from the rampart, and, coming behind the Knight of Lisfinry, with one blow brought him to the ground. Friend and foe went in one rush over the body of the knight ; but he heeded them not, for sorely wounded by the axe of Gurth, and half-smothered by his helmet, he soon sank into a deep swoon, and lay as heedless and as quiet as those who had fared even worse, and lay dead around him. The battle was soon over. The English were almost entirely cut to pieces, very few of them escaping to their ships in the harbor ; and, as night fell, the entire town and its environs were occupied by the Irish army.

When the Knight of the Red Plume awoke to something like consciousness from his stupor, it was in the house of Hugh Walsh, an old and worthy burgess of the town, who had been favorable to the interest of the Earl of Desmond, and was, therefore, now left in peaceable possession of his property. The room in which the knight woke was somewhat small in its dimensions. It was floored and wainscoted with oak of an extremely dark color ; but its gloom was dissipated by a beautifully-carved, stone-sashed window, which threw the morning light, in a cheerful

stream, upon the wall and floor. The knight's first sensation on awaking was of a racking pain in his head and every member of his body. He endeavored to turn himself upon his curtained bed, but could not; while, at the same time, he was half-conscious of the presence of another person in the room, whom he tried to speak to, but, in a few moments, fell into a half-awake and dreamy stupor again. While this lasted, he was aware of a voice singing beside him in a low, sweet cadence; and, as he recovered again, he could distinguish the words of the song. They floated through his mind with a soothing sweetness, rendered doubly sweet by their contrast with the clang and crash of battle that rang so loudly in his ears on the evening before. The voice sang as follows the words of an old love-song of the period:—

I met within the greenwood wild
My own true knight that loved me dearly,
When summer airs blew soft and mild,
And linnets sang, and waves rolled clearly;
And, oh! we pledged such loving vows,
In moss-grown glade, all green and rilly,
Where lightly waved the rustling boughs
'Mid thy dear woods, sweet Imokilly!

I met my love in festive hall,
'Mid lords and knights and warriors fearless;
And there my love, among them all,
To my fond heart was ever peerless;
And he was fond, and time could ne'er
His love for me make cold and chilly:

Ah ! then I knew nor grief nor care,
'Mid thy green woods, sweet Imokilly !

From Rincrew's turrets, high and hoar,
When autumn floods were wildly sweeping,
I saw my love ride to the shore,
I saw him in the torrent leaping,
To meet me 'neath the twilight dim,
In bowery nook, secure and stilly ;
But the ruthless waters swallowed him,
By thy green woods, sweet Imokilly !

The knight now made an endeavor to see the person of the singer ; but, in turning over for that purpose, he threw his weight upon his left arm, which had been broken on his falling beneath the axe of Gurth, and the sudden spasm of pain occasioned by the movement made him fall backward with a heavy groan. He was, however, on looking up once more, more than compensated for the pain he caused himself. A young and beautiful girl was bending over him, and regarding him with a look in which a modest shyness was blended with anxiety and compassion. Her long yellow hair, falling in shining tresses upon her shoulders, almost touched the face of the knight as he looked up half-wonder-struck ; and she adjusted the bed-covering so gently, and handled his wounded arm so tenderly, that he began to think himself in a dream, in which some bright angel had come near, and was ministering to his wants. But the effects of the swoon were now gradually disappearing from his brain ; and he

began to recollect himself; and to remember the events of the preceding day. He now began to raise himself with more care, and endeavored to ask a few questions; but the young girl put her hand to her lips, and motioned him that he was to keep silence, and to try and sleep once more. He lay back, and fell into a sweet and long sleep, from which he was only awaked towards evening by the step of some one entering the room. It was the kind leech, an old monk, who had set his arm the preceding night, and bound up the great axe-wound in his head; and he was now coming to see how his patient was progressing.

“James of Lisfinry,” said the monk, “the town is in possession of my kinsman, the Desmond, who has declared, that, were it not for thy tact and thy bravery, he would be outside the walls still.”

“Who art thou?” answered the knight. “Art thou Gerald the monk, whose life I saved at the foray of Sliabh Gua?”

“I am Gerald the Franciscan,” said the monk; “and, by God’s special grace, I am enabled and preserved to pay back the debt,—to set thy broken arm aright, and to bind up the great wound in thy head, through which thy life was fast oozing last eventide.”

“Hast thou found the child of thy brother, the murdered Knight of Barna?” asked the knight.

“No,” said the monk. “It was in my wanderings to find her that the vassals of Ormond caught me

at Sliabh Gua, and took me for a spy; and then my wanderings would have ceased, were it not for thy onslaught on my captors. Alas! since the night of the murder of my brother and his followers, in his House of Barna, I have wandered for years, but can find no traces of the poor little maiden. It is ten years now since the murderers confessed before they died, that they forgot and left her behind at their camping-place in the forest. She was but seven years old then, and, ah me! I fear she died of hunger and cold, or that the wolves fell upon her; and she was the last remnant of a once brave and gallant house. As for thee, knight," he continued, after a pause, "thou wantest but quiet and sleep, and a good nurse, and thou wilt soon be able to take into thy hands and wield that good sword of thine, that did thy work so well upon our persecutors yesterday."

"Ah!" said the knight, "had I the nurse that watched over me this morning!" But he recollected himself, and changed the conversation. "Think you," he continued, "that the English will return again, and attempt to recapture the town? Would that I were sound in head and limb ere they did so!"

"I know not," answered the monk. "But, in the mean time, your best chance, under a watchful Providence, for getting into bodily soundness again, is to speak little, and to keep quiet, and free from mental trouble."

CHAPTER II.

WE shall now leave the Knight of the Red Plume to his repose, and follow for a time the fortunes of the old monk's niece, the Orphan of Barna. About ten years anterior to the time of the foregoing incident, there stood an old castellated mansion in a deep gap, or pass, on the southern declivity of Sliabh Gua, or Knockmeledown Mountains. In this mansion dwelt Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, or, as he was more frequently called, the Knight of Barna, together with his young daughter, and a few followers. The knight's wife had died a few years before; and he, disabled by wounds and hardships in the Desmond wars, had retired to spend the remainder of his life in his House of Barna, and to bring up his young daughter, the sweetest little flower that ever bloomed in that wild and turbulent district.

This district was, in fact, another Debatable Land, under the jurisdiction, at one time, of the Earl of Desmond, and at others overrun and held in subjection by the great rival House of Ormond; so that the only protection for any man, lord, or vassal holding territory there, was his own watchfulness, cunning, or bravery. The Knight of Barna, however, deemed himself secure enough, being a near kinsman of the Earl of Desmond, and therefore less liable to the chances of being plundered

than the other followers of that great earl; and, dwelling also on that slope of the mountains farthest from the territory of Ormond, he therefore retained but a few followers in his service, who could, at best, keep but scant watch and ward around his dwelling of the gap: but time showed him the bitter foolishness of such neglect.

One March night, the Robber of Coumfay, a fierce and implacable enemy of the Desmond vassals, sat with his followers upon the summit of a steep hill that overlooked the House of Barna. The robber himself was in the act of addressing his worthy comrades; and it was evident, from his remarks, that they had just held a council of war, and were now making preparations for attacking the mansion beneath them.

“For myself,” said the robber, at the conclusion of his address, — “for myself, I want but the head of the burning old murderer himself. He hanged my brother at the gate of Youghal; and he would have broken myself upon the wheel, had I not mined my dungeon and fled, — and fled, to have this night of plunder and sweet revenge!”

“He burnt my home by the banks of Nier,” exclaimed a wild-looking young fellow from the centre of the throng; “and he lopped off my father’s head with one sweep of his sword, at the ford of Dangan: and I say, burning for burning, and head for head!”

“I had my skean at the throat of his nephew at the battle of Lisroe,” said a small, dark-complexioned

man near the chief; "and I remembered the wrongs of my race, and would have my trusty skean steeped to the hilt in his blood, only for the charge of the Knight of Rincrew, who bore down like a torrent with his men-at-arms upon us, and gave me this with a back-slash of his sword," continued he, baring his breast, and exhibiting to those about him the mark of a great wound extending from the shoulder across his breast-bone. "But to-night we can pay back all."

"Yes, and pay yourselves," exclaimed the Robber of Coumfay; "for the old wolf of Barna has more gold in his house than the mad Knight of Dangan, who shod his horse with it. Down, then, and follow me; and each man shall have his own revenge, and the fair share of spoil that pertains to his degree among us."

Not a word was spoken as the robbers descended the hill towards the devoted House of Barna. No watch-dog howled from the courtyard, no sentinel looked forth, as that fierce and merciless body of marauders surrounded the house, and blocked up the gate and every outlet by which the hapless sleepers inside might have a chance of escaping. The night was intensely dark, notwithstanding which the robbers crouched down closely by the walls and hedges, while their chief, advancing from the gateway, with his long cloak muffled closely around him, sat himself quietly down in the middle of the courtyard. Here he set up a long, wild,

wailing cry, like that of a woman in distress, and continued it, louder and shriller, until at length a small window or spy-vent was opened beside the door of the mansion, and a head protruded through the orifice.

“What dost thou here, thus so late and untimely?” said a voice which the robbers recognized at once as that of the Knight of Barna. “What bringest thou here, woman? and why dost thou disturb my house with thy mad wailing?”

“Lord of Barna,” answered the robber, feigning with practised skill the voice of a woman, “I am Oona, the wife of Shane Gar of the glen. The robbers from the Ormond’s land beset our house at the nightfall: they burned all, and killed my husband and my children; and I am here for shelter and vengeance!”

There was now a prolonged undoing of bolts at the strong, iron-studded door, during which the Robber of Coumfay stole over and stood silently beside the jamb, under the black shadow of the porch. The door was now cautiously opened, and the knight, half-dressed, stepped forth; but scarcely had he done so, when a strong hand clutched him by the naked throat, and the robber’s dagger was plunged and drawn, and plunged quickly again into his heart. He fell across his own door-step with one heavy groan, and never stirred more. The robber now yelled out a wild and exulting cry, at which his companions, rushing from their hiding-places,

broke into the house, and began to plunder. The affrighted servants were all killed, either in their beds, or defending themselves upon the staircases; and the robbers, now having their fill of plunder, assembled in the courtyard, and prepared to set fire to the house.

"The daughter, the daughter!" exclaimed several voices, as they recollected that she was still unbound, and inside. "Bring her out, and we'll yet have a ransom for her!"

"Leave her inside," said the small dark man who had spoken at the consultation upon the hill. "Leave her inside, I say; and then we'll have our revenge upon the old wolf of Barna, root and branch."

The expected ransom, however, carried the motion against the last speaker; and, in a few moments, the knight's daughter was found, cowering, and almost dead with affright, upon the stairs, and brought into the midst of her father's murderers. One of them brought out a small cloak, and, wrapping it around the child, took her in his arms, and, by the order of his chief, prepared for their wild journey homeward through the forest. The house was now set fire to in several places; and, by the light of the blazing roof, the robbers, with their spoil, turned off quickly toward the mountains.

There was a small green glade by the bank of a little stream that fell into the Suir, down that declivity of the Knockmeledown Mountains facing the plain of Tipperary, and farthest from the luckless

House of Barna. Here, some time before daybreak, the robbers halted in order to divide the spoil, and to take some refreshment after their night of fatigue and blood. The man that held the young Orphan of Barna, now laid her down under a tree by a small pathway, where, tired out by the motion of the wild retreat across the mountains, the poor little thing fell into a deep and quiet slumber. Little did the poor child dream at that moment, on her chilly bed, that the headless body of her father, and her father's vassals, and her native home of Barna, were one undistinguishable mass of black and burnt ashes, and that the eyes that once looked pleasantly upon her were dim and rayless, and the lips that often kissed her pretty cheeks were bloodless, and parted by the agony of a violent death, a few perches beneath her upon the green. The Robber of Coumfay, one of the most bloodthirsty and merciless freebooters of the time, had brought his share of the spoil with him, — namely, the head of the Knight of Barna; and had laid it beside him as he sat in the midst of the glade, among his companions. Under the superintendence of their leader, the spoil was soon divided satisfactorily among the robbers, and they all now prepared to refresh themselves.

“Paudheen Gob, come forth,” said the leader, “and give us a morsel of that bread of yours, and a draught of the red wine you brought so well through the forest. You must have the largest draught yourself for your pains.”

The worthy distinguished by the delightful appellation of Paudheen Gob was a half-fool kept by the robbers for their amusement; but he also served occasionally as a most useful and tractable beast of burden. The literal meaning of Paudheen Gob is Little Paddy of the Mouth; but Pandheen himself, like Little John, the bosom friend of Robin Hood, was a most complete antithesis to the signification of his flattering cognomen. He was considerably over six feet in height, with a formidable breadth of body and shoulders, and a small bullet-head, garnished with a mouth reaching almost from ear to ear, from which tremendous orifice, indeed, he derived his title of Paudheen Gob.

Paudheen gave a groan of distress and fatigue, when he heard the call of his chief; but the promise of the draught of wine mollified his tribulation somewhat: so, arising from where he had stretched himself among the brushwood, he walked into the centre of the throng of robbers, and laid down his burden, which consisted of some manchets of bread, and a small cask of wine they had found in the House of Barna. The robbers now set to in good earnest, and soon despatched the bread. The wine, in a short time, shared the same fate; and they all stood up, half-intoxicated, and began to descend towards the plain. They were fully half a mile away from the little glade, before they remembered that they had left the young Orphan of Barna behind them; so, halting once more, the chief

ordered Paudheen Gob to retrace his steps, and bring her with him. Paudheen, not at all relishing an excursion by himself backwards through the ghostly darkness of the forest, began to whimper, and make excuses; but a few bangs from the flat of his chief's sword across the shoulders made him dart off in the direction of the sleeping child. To Paudheen's excited imagination, as he went along, the black trunks of the trees seemed like ranks of men-at-arms ready to receive him; and when, on coming towards the spot where they had left the child, he saw a naked fragment of a tree standing before him in the path, with a few sprigs trembling on its top, and one branch projecting upwards like a spear, his affrighted brain manufactured it into a knight armed at all points; and, with a start and a bound, he turned and fled back again in the direction of the robbers. "Earla Mor, Earla Mor!" yelled he, as he dashed along at a mad pace through the brushwood, "The Great Earl is afther us wid all his min! Shamus o'Coumfay, save me, save me, or I'm kilt an' lost this morthial minnit!"

Shamus of Coumfay waited until the fool came up; and then, thinking from Paudheen's mad gesticulations that they were actually pursued, he and his companions dashed on in an easterly direction, and took to the mountains once more in order to reach the cave where they were wont to hide themselves and their spoil on occasions like this.

CHAPTER III.

IT was broad daylight when the Orphan of Barna awoke; and there, sitting upon the path, she beheld a small, handsome man, with a gittern, or guitar, across his knee, other extraordinary-looking paraphernalia around him, and a young, pale woman beside him, who seemed to be his wife. The change of scene was such a wild contrast to her home, that the poor little maiden began to rub her eyes, thinking it all a dream; but, gradually awaking to the consciousness of her situation, she sank back shivering upon her couch of grass, with a low, despairing cry. The young woman now arose, and, with affectionate care, took the child in her arms, and began to chafe her cold hands, asking, at the same time, a variety of questions.

When the orphan had answered all, and told the circumstances of her situation, as well as the cold and terror would allow her, the young woman turned to her husband, and began to hold a short consultation with him.

"I think, Jamie Bell," said she, "we have fallen upon a good chance. Since our sweet child died, there is no one to dance to thy gittern, or jangle the blithe tambour, save myself; and I am now, as thou knowest, ill able to do it."

Jamie Bell was one of those itinerant jugglers, or

gleemen, who, at that time, roved about in England from shire to shire, seeming to own no locality as their native place. Jamie's genius, however, seemed to have been somewhat disregarded in England; so, leaving his native country with his wife, he had landed in Waterford some time previous; and now, rambling about through the English-inhabited towns along the coast, he was doing a most flourishing business.

"Yes," answered Jamie, "we cannot do better than adopt her as our own. Besides, she has now no friends that we can find; and were we to take her back, and the wild Irish of that country to find her with us, truly we should stand the blame, and the deep dungeon or the gallows-tree would be our guerdon for saving her. We will keep her, Lucy."

"Wouldst thou like," said Lucy, turning to the child, — "wouldst thou wish, my pretty dear, to come along wi' us? and we will give thee brave spangled dresses, and that pretty tambour yonder to play upon."

The orphan only nestled closer to the breast of the gleeman's wife; but she answered nothing.

"The dress of our own pretty Maud — poor dear Maud! — will suit her," said Lucy; and with that she directed her husband to open a box beside him, from which she took a small, light-colored but comfortable dress, in which she quickly arrayed the young Orphan of Barna. Lucy now clipped the long, bright locks of the little orphan; so that in

the strange dress, and the strange company she was in, it would be impossible to recognize her.

For three years the Orphan of Barna rambled from town to town with the gleeman and his wife, during which time she grew more beautiful day by day, and got to play upon the gittern and tambour with unwonted skill, and to do all other things pertaining to the office of a glee-maiden. One day, Jamie Bell, his wife, and the orphan were showing off some of their performances before the admiring eyes of the English soldiers, in the courtyard of one of the garrisons in Waterford. The young lady of Barna was dancing to the tune of Jamie's gittern, when the wife of one of the officers, passing in, stopped to have a view of the performance. After looking at the child, the lady, who was accompanied by her husband, approached Lucy.

"I want a maiden, such as yon child, to wait upon me," said she. "Wilt thou let her stay with me? or is she thy daughter? for methinks she bears no resemblance to thy countenance or that of thy husband."

Jamie, who overheard this conversation, before his wife could answer, came forward. He was, it appears, in great distress, and under some pecuniary misfortune at the time; and now a thought occurred to his mind that he could easily remedy all.

"She is not our daughter, lady," said he. "We rescued her from death at one time; and as she

was an orphan, with no one to keep her, we kept her, and brought her up, as thou seest. We will give her to thee. What, lady, wilt thou give us in return for her?"

Half a dozen broad gold-pieces easily satisfied the conscience of Jamie; but not so his wife, who, with many tears and lamentations, saw the orphan, weeping bitterly also, led into the garrison by the officer and lady.

About two months after this, while Jamie the gleeman was spreading his fame in the city of Kilkenny, his wife took sick and died. With her last breath, she abjured Jamie to go and get back the little lady of Barna; and represented to him, as an incitement, the assistance she would be to him in his avocation. Jamie promised, although he had but a very slight notion of refunding the gold-pieces, to get back the child; but in a few days he began to feel the misery of being quite alone in the world. So, in a fit of desperation, Jamie set off for Waterford, and flourished so well as he went by the various towns, villages, and castles, that, on reaching his destination, he found his pockets so plentifully supplied, that, without many avaricious qualms, he could easily give back the money he received from the officer's lady. But it seems it was far easier to give the money than to get back the young orphan; and the sad reality was demonstrated in a most summary manner to poor Jamie on his demand for breaking up the bargain. He was taken up as an

impostor, and put in the stocks before the gate of the fortress. All day long, during every moment he could recall his mind from his harsh treatment, and the scoffs and jeers of the soldiers and passengers, Jamie sat planning how he could repay them for the indignity. He was set at liberty in the evening, and next day concealed himself by the side of a little green below the ramparts of the castle, where the children of the officers were in the habit of playing. About noon, to his great joy, he beheld the young lady of Barna coming out with some children; and, unobserved by the others, he beckoned to her. She knew him at once, and came joyfully to him; and the sweetness of Jamie's tongue was such, that she consented to accompany him, and to leave the fortress, of which she seemed heartily tired. They were both soon beyond pursuit, and thus once more the Orphan of Barna was leading the wandering life of a glee-maiden.

CHAPTER IV.

It is now time to return to the Master of Lisfinry, whom we left so sorely wounded in his bed. After the departure of the monk, he dozed away into a quiet sleep, but awoke at intervals during the night; for his wounds were now

becoming much more painful than during the time elapsing immediately after their infliction. Whenever he awoke, he was sensible, by some light stir or breathing, of the presence of the young girl in the room; and the feeling that he was tended and watched by such a handsome nurse made his hours of sleeping and waking sweeter till the morning. Then the bright light streamed in, and, awaking fully, he looked around; but the young girl was gone, and in her place stood the master of the house, the worthy Hugh Walsh himself, with his portly and good-natured wife.

“Sir knight,” said Hugh, “after the battle, my lord, the Desmond, did me the high honor of directing that you should be sent to my house, as you were too weak to be removed. I trust that you have found the humble attendance we were able to give, pleasing, and that you will soon be strong, and able to do the deeds pertaining to a gallant knight again.”

“I trust so, too,” said the smiling dame. “The bed, mayhap, is rather hard for the comfort of your worship; but it is even softer than Father Gerald would allow you, after binding up your wounds.”

“My worthy host and hostess,” answered the knight, “I feel as delectable as man can in such a case. As for the pains that trouble me now and then, it is not the fault of the bed or of the nursing I have got, but of fortune and my wounds. But I trust I shall soon be well; and, as Master of Lisfinry,

I shall not forget the kind nursing I am receiving under your roof."

Day after day the Knight of the Red Plume continued under the kind nursing of Hugh Walsh and his wife, and the lovely Margaret, and at length became strong enough to arise and move about, without, however, leaving the precincts of his room. It was now nearly a month after the taking of the town; and he was sitting in his room, thinking of some preparations, for on the morrow he was to leave his kind nurses, and proceed to the Castle of Lisfinry, from which the Earl of Desmond had but lately departed with his retainers in order to take up his abode in another castle. The town of Youghal was now in possession of a garrison left there by the earl; and every thing was going on as quietly in its streets as though the crash and clamor of war had never rung along its fortifications, or echoed in its mansions. As the knight sat thus thinking, the image of the sweet girl who had nursed him so well during his illness continually arose in his mind; and, in spite of himself, a feeling of fondness and tenderness (which he would not, but many would, call love) began to grow in his heart, as he thought of her unremitting and devoted attention to him, — in spite of himself; for how could he, a high-born knight, think of loving a girl, who, however beautiful, was lowly-born, and, according to the precepts of those times, unfit to mate with any of his class, proud noblemen who looked often down with scorn

on those of humbler birth, however wealthy? Still, he thought he saw something noble about the young Margaret Walsh, in her features, in her bearing, and in her actions. In this mood of mind he was, when, towards sunset, the oft-recurring subject of his thoughts entered the room, and sat down — her usual way of keeping him occupied in conversation — on a low chair near him.

“My pretty Margaret,” exclaimed the knight, “time, no matter how sweet and delightful, must have an end. We part to-morrow; but, though it will and must be a long parting, the memory of your kindness shall remain with me wherever my fate leads me.”

“Sir James,” said Margaret, looking up into the face of the knight with an innocent but concerned look, “the kindness, — if I may call it so, — the kindness I have shown was but befitting from me, the daughter of the Desmond’s most favored servant, to a kinsman of the Desmond. But I fear me about your going in your present weak state; and there are strange rumors in the town, of hostile ships being seen sailing along the coast, and of another siege of the town by the English forces from Waterford.”

“Ha!” exclaimed the knight: “they dare not. The Desmond is too strong in this territory at present; and it must be some merchant-vessels the idle loons in the town have magnified into war-galleys.”

The night had now fallen upon the town, and Sir James of Lisfinry and Margaret were still convers-

ing; when, all at once, they heard the boom of a cannon from the direction of the harbor. This was followed by a confused murmur and stir in the town: then came the booming of many cannons again, and the rattle of musketry; and no doubt was left upon the knight's mind, that what Margaret had told him was too true, — that the English had made a descent upon the town, and were determined to have it by storm. The knight had not left his room since he first entered it, and was still so weak that he found himself unable to descend the stairs unassisted; and his mind chafed within him to think that he should sit there, an idle listener to the contest, and be incapable of rendering any assistance to the garrison. Hugh Walsh himself now made his appearance, in the greatest perturbation, and said that the English had indeed returned under Capt. White, one of the most zealous leaders on the side of the queen, and had, whether by treachery or bravery he could not say, actually entered the town, and driven out the garrison. He said that the knight's only chance of safety consisted in his allowing himself to be removed with all possible speed, and concealed in a small apartment he had prepared for the purpose. The knight, assisted by Hugh Walsh and his brisk young shopman, was soon settled in his place of concealment, a small room at the extreme back of the merchant's storehouse, and from which a diminutive window looked out on a narrow street called the Sword-bearer's Close.

Yonghal was once more in the possession of the English. After a few days, however, every thing went on quietly, with the exception of a little pillage on the part of the conquerors; but they now kept such a sharp watch at the gates and on the walls, that it was impossible for the knight to make his escape. So he was fain to content himself with his little prison, as he called it, and the society occasionally of the honest Hugh and his wife, but more frequently of the young and winning Margaret.

Day by day the thoughts of the knight dwelt more and more continually upon the loveliness and engaging manners of the young girl. The voice of reason often called back his mind from those day-dreams to the plain reality of the case: but the knight was young; and, at his age, the voice of the heart is more willingly listened to than the more matter-of-fact warnings of reason. So, by slow but sweet degrees, he fell in love, and got to think upon his beautiful young nurse with other thoughts than those with which he regarded her on his first entering the little chamber in Hugh's dwelling.

CHAPTER V.

IT was now three weeks after the entrance of the English. The Sword-bearer's Close was the abode of a number of the prettiest girls in the town, and,

in consequence of this delightful fact, became the resort of several of the young soldiers from the garrison. One day, while the knight and Margaret Walsh were conversing in the little room, some disturbance arose outside in the Close. Margaret was taking a hasty look through the little window at what was passing, when a young corporal, who was in the crowd, turning suddenly round, caught her eye, and, thinking himself the sole and undivided object of her attention, put on a most amiable and engaging look, left the throng, and swaggered, with the air of a youthful Alexander, several times up and down before the window. Margaret immediately drew back, and saw no more of the amorous corporal for that day. But the next morning he was there again, with his steel cap, back-and-breast, and all his other accoutrements burnished up with an unwonted degree of care. But this time, not contenting himself with a useless perambulation along the street, he came over, and gave a glance of his enamoured eyes through the little window into the chamber of the knight, and was rewarded for his devotedness by catching a glimpse of the lovely Margaret inside. Fortunately, the knight was sitting in a corner which was not visible to the gay corporal; but on seeing Margaret cast herself with a frightened countenance into the opposite corner, and on inquiring the cause of her trepidation, she told him of the insinuating face at the window, and warned him to be on his guard. The knight, how-

ever, in spite of the warning, started up and approached the window; but the soldier was gone. Early on the same evening, the knight was sitting alone in his narrow room, and thinking on his situation in a rather unpleasant frame of mind, when the coaxing face of the corporal appeared once more, peering in at the window. It was an ill-starred moment for both; for the Master of Lisfinry rendered irritable and over-hasty by the sickness of his wounds, and unable to bear the troublesome curiosity of the corporal any longer, seized a small iron weight that accidentally lay beside him, and, flinging it with his utmost force at the forehead of the unfortunate gazer, stretched him, bleeding and senseless, upon the rough pavement outside. Some of the corporal's comrades, making their appearance at the moment, created a tremendous disturbance on his account; at which an officer, with a guard of soldiers, was ordered down from the garrison in order to investigate the matter. The result was, that Hugh Walsh's house and premises were searched, and, as a matter of course, half-pilaged, and the knight's place of concealment found. The door was instantly forced in; - but the Knight of Lisfinry was not at all disposed to give himself peaceably into the hands of his enemies; and so the first man that entered received six or eight inches of steel beneath his corselet, and fell, mortally wounded, beside the doorway. Several now rushed in; but the foremost, after a few cuts and parries,

got a slash of the knight's sword, which went sheer through the bars of his basnet, or helmet, terribly wounding him along the face, and stretching him upon the prostrate body of his comrade. The knight now retreated to the opposite corner of the room, determined to die where he stood, and still keeping a clear space around him with the sweep of his long sword.

"Yield thee, sir knight, or whatever we may call thee," said the officer of the guard, — "yield thee, or we shall cut thee to pieces where thou standest, or else set fire to the house, and burn thee to cinders with the worthless rebel caitiff who concealed thee."

The latter part of this threat, namely, the burning of the premises of Hugh Walsh, with the body of the worthy burgess himself, had far more effect upon his mind than the first clause; so, giving up his sword to the officer, he was marched out of his place of concealment, and lodged quietly in the strongest dungeon of the fortress. There he had ample leisure to think over the impropriety that heroes and heroines, captives, prisoners, and all others in similar situations, are guilty of in giving way to their passions, whether of rage or sorrow, instead of sagely and peaceably mining, countermining, and plotting their escape; and there we shall leave him for a time to ruminate over his misfortunes.

It was in the beginning of autumn. The English

had held the town in their possession for somewhat more than a month, when once more the fierce war-cry of the Irish resounded along the walls; for the Seneschal of Imokilly, with all the warlike inhabitants of that and the surrounding districts, appeared suddenly from the woods, and surrounded the fortifications on all sides. This time, no herald was sent to summon the garrison to surrender. On came the Irish in long lines and thick masses, and, filling the deep ditches with their fascines of brush-wood, gallantly scaled the ramparts, amidst a storm of cannon-balls and small shot. The walls were well manned; but the English, despite their bravery, were soon driven off the ramparts of the castle, and from that to the seaward gate of the town, where they rallied their numbers, and made a last and gallant stand.

It was just at this moment that the Master of Lisfinry heard the sound of a couple of heavy battle-axes breaking in his prison-door, which feat was soon accomplished; and Hugh Walsh, his shopman, and Gerald the monk, stood before him.

“Sir knight,” said Hugh, “we are free once more; for the seneschal has made good his oath that he would take the town; and has burst over the walls, and driven the English to the sea-gate. Take this,” continued Hugh, giving the knight a long, heavy sword. “They rally there under the protection of their guns from the harbor, and, I fear me, will regain the castle again.”

The knight took the sword, and, rushing from the castle, put himself at the head of a body of Irish who were beginning to refresh themselves after the fatigue of battle with a little pillage. "Lisfinry, Lisfinry aboo!" yelled his new followers; for they recognized him in a moment. They soon reached the sea-gate; and there the knight indemnified himself so well for his long inactivity, that the English were in a short time cut to pieces almost to a man.

CHAPTER VI.

It was evening. The knight accompanied Gerald the monk as he went about along the streets and ramparts, applying remedies to the wounded, and shriving those that were upon the point of death. As they crossed down a narrow street, they beheld a dying man before them, with his head resting on a small tambour, and a broken gittern in fragments beside him.

"Sir monk," said the prostrate man, "I fear me I am about to die. Wilt thou hear what I have to say, and shrive me for my misdeeds? Quick, quick, for my moments are numbered," he continued, as a gush of dark blood burst forth from his wounded breast.

The monk bent down and heard his confession,

and was about to move away in the direction of another group of the wounded and dying, when the man, by a sudden effort, raised himself into a sitting posture, and desired him to remain.

"Take this," he said, putting a small gold locket into the monk's hand: "this I found around the neck of a young child that I discovered, ten years ago, in the forest of Sliabh Gua."

"How?" exclaimed the monk greatly agitated, his mind reverting in a moment to his lost niece. "How came she in the forest? and by what name did she call herself?"

"She called herself Margaret of Barna," answered Jamie Bell; for it was he. "We brought her up, I trust, kindly, as we would our own child. My wife died; and, about two years after, I fell into a lingering sickness myself, and was unable to support the child any longer. I came to Youghal in order to take ship for my own bonnie Lincoln, and met a kind merchant standing with his wife at their door. I begged them, for the sake of Him who died for us all, to keep the little girl till I could come back and take her with me to England; and they, although they thought she was my daughter, in the kindness of their hearts took her in, and promised to give her a home. Hugh Walsh, I mind it well, was the kind merchant's name. I came back for the bonnie child; and, woe is me! I shall never see her blithe face again."

The gleeman was sinking gradually during his

story; and, at the last words, his head fell suddenly back upon his beloved tambour, his legs were drawn up, and jerked out with a quick spasm; and the monk, bending low to help him in his extremity, found that he was dead.

“Sir James of Lisfinry,” exclaimed the delighted monk, turning to the knight, who, the while, was standing at a little distance, “I can tell thee blithe news,—news that, from what I have many times noticed during thy illness, thou art far more concerned in than, perchance, thou wottest. My wanderings are ended. I have found the lost child of my poor brother of Barna!”

“How,” exclaimed the knight, a wild and delightful suspicion flitting through his mind,—“how hast thou found her? and how am I concerned in her discovery, more than befits a knight and a distant kinsman?”

“Margaret, Margaret thy kind and pretty nurse,” said the monk, “is not the adopted daughter of the good merchant, Hugh,—she is my niece, the young lady of Barna!”

The monk now quickly explained all to the knight, and continued, “Thou lovest her, sir knight; and I could see from her bearing towards thee that she loves thee, too, well and truly. She is an orphan, but the daughter of a brave knight, and will have her father’s district of Barna. Yet methinks she can nowhere find a braver protector or a fonder husband than the young Knight of Lisfinry.”

It were long to tell the wise saws, maxims, and gratulations of Hugh Walsh and his portly wife, when the monk and knight proceeded to their house, and explained all. It may be pathetic and amusing, but at the same time it is now needless, to dilate upon the love-meeting of Margaret the Orphan of Barna with her Knight of the Red Plume, and to tell the blithe rejoicings and brave pageants on their marriage-day. Suffice it to say that they were married by the old monk, and that they loved well and lived happily, as, I pray, O sweet reader! thou mayest live, till thou findest blissful rest in the common home of all human pilgrims.





THE FAIR MAID OF KILLARNEY.

A TALE OF ROSS CASTLE.

AMONG the almost innumerable objects of interest that come under the observation of the tourist during his sojourn in Killarney and its neighborhood, there is scarcely one whose examination will afford more pleasure than Ross Castle. Too many travellers there are, however, who either do not visit it at all, or, when they do so, pass it by with a glance, thoughtless and cursory. One, for instance, half-bewildered by the countless beauties of our Irish fairy-land, will hurry away with a confused remembrance floating in his brain, of wild pass, silvery lake, rainbow-tinted island, and sunlit, sky-piercing mountain: another, equally alive to the natural beauties of that glorious scenery, but with an eye also for objects of legendary, antiquarian, and historical interest, will return to his home, the object of his tour only half-accomplished, for want of proper and reliable information regarding the various points of attraction he

has met with during his visit. By far the greater number, however, with garrulous and flimsy guide-book in hand, flit about from Mucruss to the Devil's Punch Bowl, from the Gap of Dunloe to the Castle of Ross, from island to island, and from mountain peak to lowland shore; and carry away with them on their departure an incongruous medley of badly-told historical facts, hackneyed legends, and newly-invented nonsensical stories, all of which, they, of course, scatter liberally among their friends, both here and at the other side of the water, to the great discredit of that famed region which an erratic old gentleman of our acquaintance calls in his rapture, the "tourist's paradise." With the purpose of supplying to the tourist a few items of information of a less hackneyed character, we give, as a preliminary to our story, a short account of the spot in which its principal incidents were enacted.

Ross Castle consisted of a strong keep and other stout buildings, both of a domestic and military nature, surrounded by the usual bawn wall, with its breastworks and circular flanking towers at the corners. It is situated upon a peninsula on the eastern shore of the lower lake, and commands a view on every side of the wildest beauty and sublimity. Right before it, to the west, the lofty Reeks of Magillacuddy throw up their savage summits into the ever-varying sky; while to the south and east the horizon is broken by the steep, pyramidal crests

of the Paps, and the Mangerton range of mountains. To the north, a number of abrupt and irregular summits shut in the view; and the traveller who looks from the time-worn battlements of the ancient stronghold will see around him a panorama of crag and wood, curving shore, fairy island, and glittering wave, far surpassing even the pictures of his wildest dreams of splendor and beauty.

The ross, or peninsula, on which the castle is built, was converted, if we may so speak, into an island, by means of a deep channel cut through the marshy neck by which it joined the mainland. This channel, or ditch, was filled by the waters of the lake, and formed the chief defence of the castle on the land side. It was crossed by a drawbridge, no traces of which now exist. Regarding the precise date of the foundation of the castle, or the name of its founder, history is silent. It was probably built by some warlike chief of the O'Donoghoe sept, in the midst of whose immense territory it stands. From the style of its masonry, and other characteristics, it does not seem older than the latter part of the fourteenth century. About that date, and in several parts of Ireland before it, the Irish chieftains began to adopt some of the manners of their powerful Norman neighbors; and upon the site of their wooden *cahirs*, or fortresses, built strong castles of stone, in which they stood many a gallant siege; and from which, at the head of their followers, they often rode forth in wild array, to protect

their borders against those mail-clad invaders whose trade was war, and whose perpetual law was the strong hand, and the might of battle-axe and sword.

During the vengeful wars that then raged throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, Ross Castle frequently changed owners. From the O'Donoghoe More, by one of whose ancestors it seems to have been erected, it passed into the hands of Mac Carthy More, by whom it was transferred, in the year 1588, to Sir Valentine Browne, ancestor of the present House of Kenmare. Passing over its various reverses during the latter Desmond wars, we will proceed at once to the most remarkable period of its history; namely, its surrender to the parliamentary forces under Lieut-Gen. Edmond Ludlow, in the year 1652.

After the dismemberment of the Confederation of Kilkenny, several of the generals who had fought under its banners still held out stoutly for their native land, against the Puritans. Among these was Donogh Mac Carthy, Lord of Muskerry, chief commander, in Munster, of the Catholic forces. After his defeat at the battle of Knocknecashy, in the county of Cork, he led fifteen hundred men across the mountains, and threw himself into Ross Castle, the last stronghold of importance at that time in possession of the Irish. Thither he was followed by Gen. Ludlow, into whose possession the castle fell after a short siege. The manner in which the

castle yielded to the parliamentary general will be best understood by a perusal of our story.

At the commencement of the great insurrection of 1641, Ross Castle and the surrounding territory belonged to Sir Valentine Browne. Sir Valentine was at that time a minor, under the guardianship of his uncle, who was afterwards slain in one of the battles fought during that destructive and protracted war. The warden of the castle, towards the termination of the war, in 1652, was a distant relation of Sir Valentine, named Richard Browne, a captain in the confederate army. Capt. Richard Browne had an only child, a daughter, named Mabel, who lived with him in the castle. Mabel, at the time, was just verging into womanhood, and was a lovely girl; so beautiful, indeed, that she was called by the surrounding people, of every degree, "The Fair Maid of Killarney." It will not be at all wondered at, therefore, that the young officers who commanded under her father in the garrison should have been smitten by her beauty. Foremost among those who paid her homage was a young man named Raymond Villiers, a lieutenant of musketeers, and a descendant of a stout English settler who had come into that country about a century before.

Raymond Villiers was the possessor of a small but good estate, lying upon the shore of the Main, a river that empties its waters into Dingle Bay. The veteran warden of the castle was well ac-

quainted with the circumstances of the young lieutenant of musketeers, and looked favorably upon his attentions to Mabel; but the latter persisted in receiving the homage of her suitor with no small amount of coldness, the reason of which will be understood presently. Thus matters stood between the young pair, until the day of the battle of Knock-nielashy, in which, as was seen above, the forces of Lord Muskerry were defeated by the troops of the parliament, under Ludlow.

The sun of that disastrous day was setting beyond the wild mountains of Dingle, as Capt. Browne was standing upon the battlements of the castle, taking a survey of the warders beneath as they walked to and fro, in their monotonous avocation, behind the breastworks of the massive bawn wall beneath. Lake and island and giant hill lay bathed in a flood of golden glory around him. The blue smoke from the tall chimneys of the castle curled up in airy columns through the calm summer sky, and the slumbering quietness of the whole scene seemed to exert its soothing influence upon the mind of the gray-haired warden; for, after taking a quick survey of the sentinels below, he sat himself upon a small brass falconet, or cannon, that commanded the drawbridge, and began musing silently for some moments.

“By my faith,” said he at last, “but I wish this war was ended, and my daughter married to young Raymond Villiers! I could then sit down quietly

for the remainder of my days, and turn my thoughts to another world, which, alas! I have little time to think of in this time of foraying and slaying. Rory," continued he aloud to a wiry little sunburnt boy who usually attended him on his rounds, "go and tell Mistress Mabel that I am here, and that I want to speak to her for a few moments."

Rory disappeared in an instant down the winding stairway; and, after a little time, Mabel Browne made her appearance on the flat space on the summit of the castle, and sat down beside her father.

"Mabel," said the latter, looking affectionately upon his daughter, "I have been thinking that this wooing of Raymond Villiers has gone far enough, and that you ought to give him a favorable answer."

Now it must be premised that Mabel, only child as she was, took some liberties on that account, and usually contrived to have her own way in the end, no matter how her father threatened and stormed. Whenever she saw his brows darkening, she usually succeeded, by dint of alternate crying and coaxing, in brightening them again; but, on the present occasion, she knew, by the fixed look of determination in her father's face, that he was at last bent on carrying his point.

"I cannot tell, father," she answered, "why it is that you are so eager to get rid of me in these troublous times. As for myself, I would rather stay with you to the end of my days; and you know, also, very well, that you cannot do without me.

Think," continued she, with a smile of mingled reproach and fondness upon her lovely face, "only think of the time, two years ago, when you sent me to spend the summer with my aunt in Tralee, how you fretted and neglected yourself during my absence, and how, at last, you had to send for me, and could not bear me away ever since."

"No matter," answered her father. "Times are changing now, Mabel. I am growing old and infirm, and there is no knowing the day that I may fall in battle, or die of this cough that is now continually troubling me;" and he pointed to his stout chest, which, if the truth must be told, showed but small signs of the ravages of the complaint to which he alluded. "If it should come to that," continued he, "whom will you have to protect you during the troubles?" And he looked into his daughter's face knowingly, as if he defied her to get over the stumbling-block he had propounded.

"Oh! as for that, father," answered Mabel, "I trust in God there is but little fear of it, seeing that you are still the strongest man in the garrison. Remember that I saw you myself last week, leaping your horse over the Wolf's Hollow, a feat that does not show very much weakness or infirmity;" and she gave the gratified old soldier another of her fond, roguish smiles.

"I tell you, Mabel," rejoined he, trying to look sour in spite of himself, "no matter how affairs go with me, it has come to this, that I have set my

heart upon your marrying Raymond Villiers; and marry him you shall, for he is in every way worthy of you."

"I am sure he is," returned Mabel, "and deserving of a far better wife than I would make him; but"—

"But what?" interrupted her father. "That's the way you are always putting me off. I hope, Mabel," he continued in a yet more energetic tone, "that you are not still thinking of that wild spend-thrift, Donogh of Glenmourne."

A bright blush overspread the features of Mabel Browne at the sound of that name. She looked upon her father reproachfully, her eyes all the while gradually filling with tears.

"If I am, father," she said mournfully, "I cannot help it now and then. You know there was once a time when you did not forbid me to do so. However," she continued with a sigh, "I will try to forget him since you wish it; but I cannot, I cannot give my heart to Raymond Villers, because"—

"Because he is not worthy of it, I suppose you will say," said her father somewhat bitterly. "But know, Mabel, that Donogh Mac Carthy of Glenmourne is now landless, and has nought save his sword to depend on; and, by our lady, but that's but a weak prop to depend on in these dangerous times!"

"I know it," returned Mabel, her eyes brightening as she thought of her absent lover. "I know that he was robbed of his estate by Cromwell; but that is no reason why I should play him false."

"I knew that was the answer you would make," said her father; "but, notwithstanding, you must wed, and that soon, with Raymond Villiers. Ha! what is that I see? Look, Mabel, look! I trust in God, whoever it is, that he brings us good news!" And he pointed towards a slope at the eastern side of the castle, down which a horseman was riding towards them in furious haste.

"There must have been a battle fought!" exclaimed Mabel, looking eagerly upon the approaching courier, as he still rode on, his helmet and trappings glittering in the red beams of the setting sun. "See! he is facing directly for the drawbridge. My God! it is he, it is he!" And again the red blood mounted to her cheeks, and the tears sparkled in her eyes, as she became conscious of exhibiting such unusual emotion before her father.

"Who is it?" asked the latter eagerly. "Your eyes are sharper than mine, Mabel; and I do not know him yet."

"It is Donogh of Glenmourne!" exclaimed Mabel, scarcely able to restrain herself from darting down the stair to welcome the coming of the young horseman.

"I know him now," said her father. "Look at his horse all covered with foam and mire! Look at his plume shorn off, and the sad plight he is in! He is the bearer of bad news." And with that the old veteran left his seat upon the cannon, and hurried down the stair, followed by his daughter.

With a hasty step, he strode to the drawbridge, which, by his orders, was immediately let down to give ingress to Donogh of Glenmourne, who, in a few moments afterwards, rode inwards, and dismounted in the courtyard; where he was soon surrounded by an eager throng, all burning to hear the news with which he was sent thither. The tidings he brought were sorrowful enough; and shouts of anger, and execrations deep and fierce, were muttered by his hearers, as he told them, how, that morning, Lord Muskerry was vanquished in the battle of Knocknashy. After giving this disagreeable bit of information with a soldier's brevity, he followed the warden of the castle to a private room in order to deliver some further instructions with which he had been charged by his general after the battle.

Donogh of Glenmourne was as good a specimen of the young Irish officer of the time as could well be seen. He was about twenty-five years of age, strikingly handsome, tall of stature, and had that bold, frank bearing that so well became his degree, which was that of a captain of cavalry. To the owner of a pair of bright eyes that watched him eagerly from a little window overhead, he now appeared doubly interesting as he walked forth once more in his battle-soiled armor, and joined a little knot of officers who were conversing in the courtyard. For a few moments only, Mabel regarded him, and then hastened down to her father to hear the tidings.

"I fear, Mabel," said her father, "that you will have but a sorry time of it henceforth. Lord Muskerry is now marching with the remnant of his forces across the mountains, and will be here early to-morrow. He will, of course, be followed by Gen. Ludlow : so I think you had better get ready and go to your aunt at once ; for we are about to stand a siege."

"I cannot leave you, father," said Mabel ; "so do not send me away. Whatever happens, I would rather stay with you ; and, besides, you know that I am safer here than I should be in Tralee."

"Perhaps it may be so," returned her father ; "but we will think it over. In the mean time, I must go and give directions to have the castle ready for Lord Muskerry and the somewhat large force he is bringing with him." And he walked out, and speedily called the garrison to arms. The noise of preparation soon rang from end to end of the huge fortress. At last, night settled down upon hill and lake and tower ; and all became still, save the tread of the wary sentinels as they paced to and fro along the ramparts.

About the noon of the following day, Lord Muskerry arrived with his forces and a great prey of cattle, which they had taken during their retreat from the bloody field of Knocknicalshy. The ramparts of Ross Castle were now crowded with men ; and all was busy preparation for the expected siege. The outworks at the land side were strengthened,

additional provisions were gathered hastily but abundantly in from the surrounding country, guns were placed commanding every available approach; and at length the castle seemed capable of holding out stoutly against the well-appointed forces of the enemy. Some of the broken Irish regiments were also encamped in the surrounding woods; so that Gen. Ludlow, when he invested the castle with an army of about six thousand men, had a game to play as difficult as it was dangerous. In such a state of affairs, the siege went on slowly, scarcely a cannon having been fired on either side for several days after the arrival of the parliamentary army. Outside the castle, however, continual skirmishing was going on between the enemy and the Irish troops, who occupied several advantageous positions amongst the woods and hills.

Matters were in that condition, when one evening Mabel stole up to the battlements of the castle in order to obtain a view of the hostile camp. Plainly enough it lay, almost beneath her, towards the east; the arms of its occupants all flashing and glittering in the sun, and the painted banners flaunting proudly in the evening breeze. As she stood gazing with curious eye upon that martial scene, she heard a light step behind her, and, turning round, beheld Raymond Villiers approaching from the stairway, with a somewhat troubled look upon his dark and handsome features. He sat himself upon the battlement beside her, and for some time neither spoke.

His troubled and somewhat diffident manner might be easily accounted for by the fact that he had then and there determined to try his last chance of getting a favorable answer from Mabel. The single warden who watched from the summit of the castle was standing upon a small pinnet, or tower, at the opposite side, and could not hear their conversation, which at last Raymond Villiers wound up his courage to begin.

"I have sought you, Mabel," he said, "for many reasons. This siege must soon be ended; for I am sure the fortress cannot hold out against yonder splendid and brave army, and then there will be many changes. You will see, then, why I am anxious to understand your sentiments towards me."

"I pray you," returned Mabel, with a cold smile, "to explain to me, Master Villiers, why the castle cannot hold out. Surely, Lord Muskerry is strong enough to hold his own here at least, where he has a deep lake, a goodly trench, and a brave castle crowded with men to back him."

"That may be," said Villiers. "But there seems to be some curse upon our cause. Every thing goes badly with us; and why should this castle hold out when stronger ones have fallen?"

"This is language that ill befits a soldier," answered Mabel, smiling contemptuously. "You, Master Villiers, were wont to boast loudly enough whilst the enemy was far off. Now that he is near us, it seems strange that you cannot keep your

heart up like a brave man in the emergency. Do not expose yourself too much, I pray you," she added, with another smile of contempt. "Keep in shelter of that battlement beside you, else yonder gun that the enemy seems arranging in the battery on the height may pick you off ere the siege is well begun."

Nothing is so maddening to a lover as a word or smile of contempt from the woman he loves. The temper of Raymond Villiers was hot and violent; and Mabel's tone and look enraged him beyond measure, though he strove to hide his anger.

"I did not come to discuss military tactics," he said, with a forced smile. "I am here, Mabel, to decide my fate with regard to you; and thus I ask you, for the last time, will you become my wife when this siege is over?"

"Nay," returned Mabel, "it would be indelicate of me to consent so hastily, seeing that the siege, as you say, is to come to so speedy a termination. So," she continued in the same ironical tone, "I cannot grant your request."

"I have dallied long enough," muttered Villiers, a frown in spite of himself darkening his features. "This is to be my final answer, then," added he, turning to Mabel: "I am to understand, that in spite of my devotion, and in spite of all your father's commands, you will not consent to be my wife?"

"No," returned Mabel, firmly; "for my father will never force me to it."

“You will not, then?”

“No. And now, Raymond Villiers, let us put an end to this forever. You know I cannot be your wife, and you know also the reason of it.”

“Yes,” exclaimed Villiers bitterly, “I know it. *He* is here, and you love him. But we will see to it, — by the breath of my body but we will see to it!” And he stood up, and, bowing coldly to Mabel, took his way down the stairway with a black and revengeful frown upon his swarthy brows.

Mabel Browne, with the sharpness of a woman, noticed the look, and partly guessed its meaning. Coupling it with his demeanor for a long time previous, from which she judged that he would think little of changing sides in the war, she determined, for her own sake, and for the sake of the castle of which her father was warden, to watch his motions narrowly for the future. But for several days afterwards, during which the siege began to grow somewhat hotter, she saw nothing in the conduct of Raymond Villiers to confirm the secret suspicions she had formed of his fidelity to the Irish cause.

A week had now passed away. It was midnight. Bencath'the black gloom that shrouded lake and castle and giant mountain, a tall figure, muffled in a long military cloak, glided along the rampart towards a sentinel who stood beside the western turret, facing the water. The sentinel turned, and demanded the watchword for the night. It was

given; and the tall figure moved down to the water's edge, and, stepping cautiously into one of the three small boats that were moored beneath the shadow of the tower, took the oars, and shoved it silently out into the lake. By and by another muffled figure, evading the observation of the sentinel in the darkness, stole silently beneath the rampart, and, stepping into one of the remaining boats, put it off in a similar manner. The first boat glided noiselessly across the lake, and, at last, landed its occupant upon the shore, above which was situated the camp of the parliamentarians. The second, also, followed stealthily in its wake; but, stopping some distance from the shore, turned back again, after a short time, towards the castle. As it glided in beneath the shadow of the western tower, the figure which it bore left it, and soon gained the courtyard unobserved. It then glided up a stairway of the castle; and, entering a little chamber, the long cloak that muffled it was cast upon the floor, and the lovely face of the Fair Maid of Killarney was revealed in the light of a small taper that was burning upon a table near the fireplace.

"Whoever he is," she said, as she sat herself beside the table, "he is a traitor. But I will wait and watch; and assuredly I will find him, or my name is not Mabel Browne."

Meanwhile let us follow Raymond Villiers; for he it was that had gone upon his dark midnight mission across the lake. After narrowly escaping

being shot by the advanced sentinel of the enemy, he contrived to make his purpose known, and was soon conducted into the presence of Gen. Ludlow.

"What dost thou want?" said the stern Puritan general, in a surly tone at being awaked from his first slumbers. "Why didst thou not come in the light of day with thine errand, whatever it is?"

"For the best reason in the world, general," answered Villiers. "If any of my own people saw me, my life would not be worth a silver crown. I come from the fortress yonder."

"Ha!" exclaimed Ludlow, "I begin to understand thee now. What of the castle? and hast thou any method by which we can take it speedily?"

"You will never take it by your present tactics," answered Villiers; "for the garrison is well-manned, and they have abundance of provisions, besides the natural strength of the place. I am a lieutenant of musketeers. If I succeed in gaining you a passage across the drawbridge, or point out another method by which you can take the castle, will you give me the same rank in your army?"

"Gladly, gladly!" answered Ludlow, who knew but too well the strength of the garrison. "And now, in case thou canst not betray the drawbridge to us, — obtain passage over it for us, I mean, — what is thine other method?"

"There is a prophecy regarding Ross Castle," answered Villiers, "which the majority of those

who now defend the castle believe in with their hearts and souls; and, when they see this accomplished, I will stake my life they will yield the castle to you on the easiest terms. It is this, — that Ross Castle can never be taken till the enemy sail in a fleet of ships upon the lake. Can you not accomplish the prophecy?"

"I think so," answered the Puritan general, after a long pause, during which he sat thinking intently. "Ho, there!" continued he to the grim orderly, who stood guard at the door of his tent: "summon hither Scout-master-general Jones, and say that I want to consult with him on a most important matter."

In a short time, the scout-master-general made his appearance; and there followed a long consultation, at the end of which Raymond Villiers took his departure, and succeeded in reaching his quarters in Ross Castle unobserved. The result of Ludlow's consultation was, that, in case Villiers failed in otherwise betraying the castle, Scout-master-general Jones undertook to procure and transport from Kinsale to Castlemain Bay, and thence overland to the parliamentary camp, the materials, ready made, of a fleet of heavy gunboats, with which they could attack the castle from the lake.

Two days passed away, during which Villiers found that there was but small chance of betraying the drawbridge of the castle to the enemy. He therefore finally resolved to leave the place, and go

over as secretly as he could to the hostile camp. It was thus, that, about midnight, he contrived to procure a boat as before, and make his way across the lake. This time, however, Mabel Browne, who constantly watched his motions, and who now sat concealed beneath the dark shade of the wall, knew his features as he glided past, and followed him, as she did the other night, over the water. As he stepped upon the land, an unlucky splash of Mabel's oar caught his ear. He stood, and, peering outward through the darkness that overhung the water, caught sight of the boat and the figure that sat therein, which he, of course, thought was that of a man. A fierce frown of vengeance contracted his dark brow; and, drawing a long pistol from his belt, he fired at the indistinct figure. The next moment, a wild shriek of agony and terror rang over the dark lake; and Mabel Browne, with her arm broken between the elbow and shoulder, dropped like a wounded bird into the bottom of the boat. Fortunately, a smart breeze was blowing at the time from the eastward, and floated the boat towards the opposite shore of the lake, else the poor wounded Maid of Ross would have fallen into the ruthless hands of the parliamentary soldiers.

The report of the pistol, and the wild shriek of Mabel, were followed by loud confusion in castle and hostile camp. Each side thought that the pistol-shot was a signal for an attack of some kind. Men hurried to and fro by rampart and trench. The

cannon on both sides opened fire for a short interval; but at length all settled down quietly again, and the night passed away. Little did they know that night, in the Castle of Ross, of the terrible agony their warden's daughter endured beside the solitary shore of the lake, to which the boat was driven by the breeze.

The dawn was faintly tinging the eastern sky, when the Fair Maid of Ross awoke from one of the long swoons into which she had fallen since she had received the treacherous shot of Raymond Villiers. There was now light enough, but she had scarcely sense left to look around her. Her arm was lying helplessly by her side; her dress and the bottom of the boat were all stained with blood; and, as she endeavored to move herself so as to get a view of where she was, a sharp pang shot through the wounded limb, and, with a faint scream of anguish, she dropped back again into her former position in the boat. Then the precipitous, forest-girded shore above her seemed to whirl in a weird and terrible dance before her eyes; and another swoon relieved her for a time from the torture of her wound.

When she next awoke to consciousness, it was with a cooling and somewhat pleasant sensation. She opened her eyes; and the first object they fell upon was the welcome and pitying face of Donogh of Glenmourne. He was standing over her in the little boat, washing the blood from her neck and arm, and sprinkling the cool water gently over her

face. All was soon explained. Donogh, who commanded a party of horse amid the woods, was returning from a reconnoitring excursion by the shore, and thus found her whom he little expected to see in such a woful state that breezeless summer morning. When she told him, as well as her weakness would permit her, of the treachery of Raymond Villiers, and how it was from his murderous shot she had received her wound, Donogh swore a stern oath, that, ere many days should elapse, he would avenge the deed surely and suddenly upon the head of his perjured rival. Before another hour was over, Mabel Browne, to the surprise and consternation of her stout old father, was lying in her little chamber in Ross Castle, awaiting the coming of the surgeon who attended Lord Muskerry's army. Under the care of that scientific worthy, her fractured arm was bound up; and, in a few days, the fever that followed her mishap passed away, and she was pronounced out of danger.

Meanwhile the siege went on. The parliamentary general pushed his approaches nearer and nearer to the castle; and the cannon and small arms on both sides rattled away most industriously every day from morning until night. About ten or a dozen days after the occurrence of the foregoing events, two horsemen might have been seen riding in wild haste over the mountains, and approaching the north-western shore of the lake. It was Donogh of Glenmourne and one of the dragoons belonging

to his troop. Leaving his horse to the care of his orderly, Donogh descended into a secret nook by the water's side, and was soon rowing a little boat he had taken therefrom, across the lake to the Castle of Ross. The news he brought was, that Scout-master-general Jones, with a skilful engineer named Chudleigh, had just landed in Castlemain Bay with a vast quantity of timber ready hewn for large boats, and was now on his way across the country to the camp, escorted by a strong convoy of the parliamentarians, horse and foot. After giving this news, he again crossed the lake, and soon joined his troop, with which he hovered upon the track of the approaching convoy. As the latter passed through a narrow defile, he fell upon it, sword in hand, with his men, and had a sharp skirmish. He was, however, finally repulsed, but not till he had the satisfaction of knocking Raymond Villiers on the head with his own hand, and thus ending the new career that gentleman of an easy conscience intended running under favor of the parliament.

The convoy arrived safely at Ludlow's camp; and the boats, under the superintendence of Chudleigh of Kinsale, were soon put together and fit to be launched. One fine morning, when the garrison of Ross awoke, they were not a little astonished to see a fleet of ships, or, in other words, large gunboats, floating upon the lake, with cannon ready pointed at their bows, and colors flying jauntily overhead. All cried, with one voice, that the fatal prophecy

was fulfilled, and that the castle could hold out no longer. Lord Muskerry, seeing the despondent spirit that pervaded his little army, demanded a parley with his enemy. The end of it was, that, after a long debate, a capitulation was drawn up; and Lord Muskerry yielded the Castle of Ross, on very honorable terms, however, to the parliamentary general. This put an end to that terrible war which had devastated the country for so many years.

Immediately afterwards, Donogh Mac Carthy rode over the mountains with a score of his bold horse-men, and dispossessed the Puritan undertaker who held his House of Glenmourne. The Puritan, perhaps, seeing plenty of estates, far larger and richer, going almost for nothing around him, prudently made no noise about the affair; and thus our young captain of cavalry entered once more into possession of his home, in which he and his descendants were confirmed after the restoration. Some months after the yielding of the castle, Donogh of Glenmourne was made doubly happy by his marriage with the Fair Maid of Killarney; and with the light-hearted pair, it is said that the stout old warden, Capt. Richard Browne, lived afterwards, for the rest of his days, a life of jovial ease and contentment.





AN EYE FOR AN EYE.

DO you think she will love me less, Tibbot?" "Well," answered Tibbot, leaning back in his seat beside the bed, whereon his young companion-in-arms, Walter de Berminghame, lay pale and ill from the wounds he had got in a recent tourney, — "well, that depends much, I think, on the way she has loved you heretofore. If Maude le Poer be the girl you have often pictured her to me, she will be true; but then, if she be like those light-hearted dames we met at the last revel in Dublin Castle, I fear for you, Wattie."

"She is light-hearted enough, truly," said Wattie, raising himself uneasily, and looking sadly upon his companion, with one eye (he had lost the other in the tourney); "but then she has always been leal and good, and will not forsake me for this sad accident, — if accident I may call it; for all know that it was done falsely and treacherously by my antagonist."

"It surely was," answered his companion; "for I

saw the deed done myself, and can speak fairly on the matter."

"Yes!" resumed the other darkly, falling back upon his couch as a twitch of pain shot across his still feverish brow. "Ah, Tibbot! it was an unmanly blow, to strike me when I was unhorsed and helpless on the tourney-ground. But, by the good faith of my body, John de Lacy shall pay dearly for it when we next come face to face!"

"That," said Tibbot Burke, "may occur soon enough, if you are well in time to join the march of my Lord de Berminghame and his army northward. The De Lacys have all joined the standard of Edward Bruce; and there will soon be a battle. Stir up your heart, man, and get well once more; and, when we stand side by side in the onset, the best De Lacy of them that comes in front of our spears we will make pay for the unknighly blow."

"I care not to meet any one but him," resumed Wattie. "From him I have sworn to take what he has taken from me, whenever we meet, be it in peaceful hall or on field of battle. But it is hard for me to get well with this trouble on my mind about Maude le Poer. I have not seen her since that luckless tourney-day; but, when I do, I fear me that the loss of this poor eye of mine will make a sad difference in her favors. And yet we are betrothed, Tibbot. Surely, she cannot break her vows. And yet," continued he, with a sigh, "I have known others to break them for a far slighter cause."

"Think not upon it," said Tibbot Burke cheerfully. "Why, man, if a poor fellow depended on his mere good looks now-a-days for getting a wife, he would have but little chance of matrimony. Your Maude will stick to you while you have the money, even had you lost both your eyes."

"I hope so," said Wattie, in a more cheerful tone. "And now, Tibbot, I will pluck up my heart; and who knows but I may be well enough to undertake a journey in a few days? An I be, my first care will be 'boot and saddle,' and off to Dublin to see Maude."

"Good!" answered Tibbot Burke: "and I will accompany you; for I see no use in loitering here any longer, when the whole community is up in arms to repel the Bruce. We can then go both together into the coming battle, where you may meet De Lacy, and repay him for the blow that has cost you so much."

A week after, and the two young squires were riding across the Pale, attended by a stout clump of spears, and bound for Dublin, where the army of Lord De Berminghame lay, before commencing its march to the north to meet Edward Bruce, brother to the renowned Robert Bruce, King of Scotland. Edward Bruce at this time, proclaiming himself King of Ireland, was supported by several native princes, together with many of the most powerful Anglo-Irish lords.

It was a bright autumn evening as Wattie de Ber-

minghame and Tibbot Burke, at the head of their spearmen, approached the western gate of Dublin. The two young squires were what was called brothers-in-arms; that is, a mutual friendship was sworn between them: and each, by his vow, was bound to defend and aid the other in all straits and misfortunes, with his worldly gear, with his sword, and with his very life, in cases of extremity.

As they rode onward by the Liffey shore towards the ancient city, they beheld the whole sloping plain, from the river to where Phibsborough now stands, covered with tents, amidst which many a bright spear-point glittered in the rosy light of the descending sun, and many a gay banner fluttered that bore the arms and cognizances of the stout lords and barons of the Pale, who were then gathered with their strongest muster, waiting for Lord de Berminghame to lead them forth to battle.

“Lead the men forward, and procure them a place to camp for the night,” said Wattie. “Meanwhile, I will push on for the city, ere the gates are closed.”

With these words, he rode down the busy streets of the city, his mind in a strange tumult at the thought of meeting so soon with the lovely Maude le Poer, who was one of the handsomest and richest dames of the Pale. At length he halted before a huge stone mansion; and there, giving his horse into the care of his gilly, or attendant, he entered beneath the massive porch, and was soon in the presence of his lady-love.

"How did she greet you, Wattie?" asked Tibbot Burke, as his companion joined him after next morning's *réveillée*.

"I faith, agreeably enough," answered De Berminghame: "pleasanter than I thought, notwithstanding my disfigurement."

"Tush!" said Tibbot. "Call it no disfigurement, man. I warrant me that your other eye will be sharp enough to pick out your foe from the Bruce's ranks during the battle, which, they have told me, is sure to take place."

"Doubtless but it will," returned his companion; "for I think, an I were stricken blind altogether, I could still pick him out amongst a thousand, for two reasons."

"Methought," said Tibbot, "that you had but one reason for encountering De Lacy; namely, to avenge yourself for the loss of your eye."

"An eye for an eye I surely will have," answered De Berminghame. "But I now have another reason for trying a mortal tilt with De Lacy; and that is Maude le Poer's command."

"Good!" said Tibbot Burke, in high admiration of the warlike parting-word of Maude. "May Heaven send me a high-spirited wife like that! But, ha! there sound the clarions, warning us to prepare for march. You will soon have an opportunity of executing the command of your lady-love."

In the centre of the camp was a large pavilion, in front of which stood the great standard of Lord

John de Berminghame, general of the Anglo-Irish army. Before this standard, the general, in full armor, was seated upon his horse, his principal knights and barons around him, giving the various orders for the march. The tents were soon struck, and the followers of the different leaders arranged in stern array behind their various ensigns. It was a splendid scene. The fresh morning sun glittered on numerous spear-points, and flashed incessantly from polished corselets and plumed helmet; and the early breeze, as it blew up the plain, wafted upon its wings the farewell cheer of the thousands who thronged the strong ramparts and battlements of Dublin, as the army, after extending itself into one long line, with a last wild burst of pipes and clarions, took its way northward to the battle-field, whence many of those who filled its numbers were fated never to return.

Wattie Berminghame and his brother-in-arms, with the spearmen they led, marched on with the centre body, which was commanded by the general in person.

"As for me," said Tibbot, "I expect my spurs at last; for I am sure it will be a gallant fight."

"And I also," returned his companion. "I will either win my spurs, or die."

It was a calm, sultry noon when the two hostile armies came in sight of each other at a place called Faughard, near Dundalk. The Scots were inferior to the Irish in point of numbers; but then they

were led by experienced and renowned generals, and expected a complete victory in the contest, which soon commenced. Lord de Berminghame, who was also a brave and practised general, had taken up an advantageous position at the foot of Faughard Hill; and, when the first line of the Scots rushed obliquely upward to attack him, his heavy-armed knights and spearmen drove them back with considerable loss into the hollows. By a simultaneous movement on the part of the two leaders, both the armies, wings and centres, at last came together with a terrible shock, and mingled in the confusion of a general battle.

As young De Berminghame and his friend passed out to the front in order to seek some opportunity for distinguishing themselves, they beheld an Anglo-Irish knight named John de Maupas, several spear-lengths before them, riding in full tilt against Edward Bruce, who, according to his wont, fought in the van of his army. Bruce and some of his knights were at the moment engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter with the Irish general and a few of his principal leaders, when De Maupas, coming up, struck his spear through the neck of the Scottish prince, and bore him to the ground, where he was trampled to death by the raging horses. Alan, Lord Steward, who was by the side of the Bruce, whirled round his huge two-handed sword, and, with one blow, slew De Maupas, who fell over the body of him he had so lately overthrown.

“Look, look!” exclaimed Wattie Berminghame eagerly, as the combatants now swayed to and fro, and grappled with one another, man to man. “See, Tibbot! There goes the De Lacy’s banner beneath in yon boggy hollōw. Follow me; for I must find him!” And with that he spurred downward, and was just in time, with his friend, to join in an attack which the Anglo-Irish were making on foot, upon the left wing of the Scots in the swampy hollow. And now his heart bounded with a fierce delight, as, soon after dismounting, he was brought in the rushing attack almost face to face with his hated foe, young De Lacy, kinsman to the earl of that name, who was that day fighting on the part of Edward Bruce. About three paces in front of him stood Tibbot Burke, engaged in a deadly struggle with a gigantic Scottish knight, who seemed to be the comrade of young De Lacy. Poor Tibbot went down with a loud clang, mortally wounded before the Scotsman, who, in turn, was brought to his knee, and slain by the heavy sword of De Berminghame, as the latter bestrode the body of his brother-in-arms.

“Yield thee, thou blind dog!” shouted young De Lacy tauntingly, as Wattie now turned to him.

The answer was a heavy blow upon the shoulder, and then a thrust in the eye from De Berminghame’s long sword. The weapon went right through the brain of De Lacy, who fell dead almost without a groan.

“An eye for an eye!” shouted De Berminghame;

“and now God and my lady-love assist me in earning my spurs!”

He dashed quickly into the thickest of the enemy, and performed such deeds of valor, that, ere night, when the Scots were completely routed, he was knighted by his kinsman, Lord de Berminghame, in the presence of the assembled leaders of the army, amongst whom was the father of Maude le Poer. To the latter he was married some time after; and the only regret he felt on the bridal-day was, that his faithful brother-in-arms, the gallant but luckless Tibbot Burke, was not alive to be a witness of his happiness.





THE ROSE OF DRIMNAGH.

WHATEVER side we turn to around the city of Dublin, we are sure to meet mementoes that carry our thoughts back to those turbulent days when lance and sword usually settled questions which are now adjudicated without disturbance, save an occasional battle of tongues, in our peaceful courts of law. Many of those ancient fortresses, which, like a crescent chain of watchful sentinels, towered beyond the city for the protection of the Pale, still remain, and raise their hoary heads over valley and river shore, adown which, in bright array, plumed nobles, and steel-clad knights, and men-at-arms rode gallantly forth to battle, where the weary creaght lowed, after the foray in which they had been driven from some far-off fastness of Imayle, Leix, or Ossory; and where the minstrel, half-Irish and half-Norman, once twanged his gittern as he went from castle to castle, relating in rousing and voluble stanzas the deeds of the knights of St.

George.* Among the most remarkable and interesting of these ancient structures is the Castle of Drimnagh, the subject of many a legendary tale. Could the bearded old warriors who once thronged its halls awake, they would witness many a wonderful change since the half-forgotten days when they lived and loved, revelled and fought, conquered or sustained defeat. Where the Asla, or mounted courier, once spurred forth upon his hasty errand, the lightning of heaven now speeds by telegraphic wires to the farthest corners of the land; through the craggy passes, and along the level plains, marked some centuries ago with scarcely a bridle-path, the mighty steam-horse thunders over its iron track with its ponderous load; and, instead of the small city which lay cooped up within its battlemented walls around the castle, a glittering panorama of streets and squares, docks, store-houses, towers, and splendid domes, now spreads outward to the capacious bay, where, in place of the crazy fleets of diminutive war-galleys and merchant-vessels, with their fantastic prows and carved mast-heads, the huge hull of the steam-propelled ship now rides at anchor beside the populous quays, or ploughs the blue waves beyond the hoary headlands of old Ben Hedar, like a miniature volcano, with its attendant cloud-volumes on the far horizon line.

* This band of knights was instituted in the year 1475, for the protection of the English Pale. A troublesome life they must have led in those days; for there never passed a season over their heads that they did not cross swords with the neighboring Irish clans.

Retaining still some of its ancient appurtenances, such as its moat, curtain-walls, &c., the Castle of Drimnagh presents one of the best specimens in the neighborhood of Dublin of the ancient feudal stronghold. It stands beside the way leading from Crumlin to the village of Clondalkin, and within a few short miles of the city. According to the most authentic accounts, it was founded in the time of King John, by a knight named De Bernival, who came to Ireland in the train of that prince, and received from him a grant of the surrounding lands. From this knight, the different families of Barnwell in Ireland claim their descent. His death occurred about the year 1221; and his descendants held possession of Drimnagh and Terenure till the time of James the First, when their possessions, after a tedious lawsuit, fell to Sir Adam Loftus. During the great insurrection of 1641, it was garrisoned for the king by the Duke of Ormond, and had the rare fortune of escaping the destruction that followed, after the arrival on these shores of Cromwell and his stern legions. It is still inhabited, and in good preservation, and will well repay the tourist who leaves the dust and toil and din of the city, and saunters out along the quiet country-roads, to pay it a visit. Should he linger there, and hold converse with the surrounding peasantry, he will hear many a story and romantic legend of days gone by, the particulars of which will prove no unpleasing accession to his note-book. One of these we will now proceed

to relate, and hope it may prove as interesting to the reader as it did to ourselves, when we heard it told one quiet summer evening beneath the shadow of the ivy-wreathed battlements of Drimnagh.

During the reign of a certain English monarch, whose name we need not particularly mention, Sir Hugh de Barnwell ruled with a high and lordly hand in his feudal stronghold of Drimnagh. He was a stout and stern knight, whose life had been spent amid the commotions of the war that, year by year, raged between the Palesmen and the Irishry. Many a tough battle he had fought, and many a wound he had received, since he first donned the knightly spurs; and it will not be wondered at, therefore, when we mention that he looked upon the native races around with no small amount of hatred. Among those against whom his animosity burned most fiercely were the O'Byrnes, lords of Imayle, whose chief had once sacked his Castle of Drimnagh, and driven the herds pertaining to it over the southern mountain barrier, into Wicklow. The chief was still living at the time our story commences, and had two sons, the youngest of whom, named Sir John O'Byrne, was a knight of unwonted bravery. To his great personal beauty was added every accomplishment fitted for one of his high station; and when, at the head of his bold horsemen, he rode down the mountains, on a foray into the Pale, it would be hard to find in the whole wide champaign over which he cast his

eagle eye a man of more splendid appearance and gallant bearing. Sir Hugh de Barnwell had one son, who was renowned throughout the Pale for his prowess, and for the ferocity with which he always fought against the neighboring chief of Imayle. The following will explain his reasons for hating the O'Byrnes with such bitterness. Living in his father's house at the time, was his cousin, Eleanora de Barnwell, who, in consequence of her beauty, was called "The Rose of Drimnagh." To this young lady Sir Edmond de Barnwell had been betrothed; and matters went on smoothly and pleasantly enough for some time, till, during a truce entered into between the Palesmen and the Wicklow clans, Eleanora met Sir John O'Byrne at a nobleman's house, on a festival-day, in Dublin. Up to this, The Rose of Drimnagh knew little of her heart; but she soon learned to love the young Wicklow chief, and, as a natural consequence, to look with coldness and indifference upon her cousin, who, at length coming to the knowledge of the affair, swore to be avenged upon his rival. The truce was scarcely over, when he was up and at work; and many a rifled hamlet and burning dwelling marked his track through the glens of Wicklow; and many a desolate widow cursed his name and race as she sung the *keen* over the bodies of her slaughtered ones, who had fallen beneath the spears of Sir Edmond de Barnwell and his ruthless followers.

But at last a time came when a triumphant light shone in Sir Edmond's eyes; for he thought upon the day, now near at hand, which was fixed upon for his marriage with the lovely Rose of Drimnagh.

"Once more," he said, "I will seek the mountains, to find him before the marriage revel. By the soul of a knight, an I lay my hands upon him, but he shall rue the hour! — yes, rue it; for I swear to bring him in chains to look upon the bridal, and then to string him up, as I would one of his own mountain wolves, upon the gallows-tree, before the gate of Drimnagh."

It was nightfall as he spoke thus. Little he knew, that, at that same moment, Sir John O'Byrne was sitting quietly beneath the dark shadows of a tree outside the moat, looking up cautiously at the window of the little chamber in which Eleanora de Barnwell was sitting, weeping bitterly over the sad fate to which she knew but too well she would soon have to submit. As she sat thus, a low soft sound, like the cooing of a dove, fell upon her ears. She listened intently a moment, then stepped softly over to the single window of the apartment, and, opening the casement, looked out. Again the sound stole up from under the dense foliage that shaded the outer edge of the moat. Eleanora leaned upon the sill, and peered down into the gloom; but nothing met her gaze, save the ghostly shadows of the trees upon the black belt of water beneath.

"It is his signal," she whispered to herself as the sound was repeated once more. "Ah, me! I fear he will get himself into danger on account of these nightly visits. And yet I cannot, I cannot bid him stay away."

She muffled herself in a dark mantle, moved towards the door, opened it cautiously and listened, ere she ventured to steal down and meet her lover.

"I must and will warn him to-night to stay away," continued she, as, with a light and stealthy step, she descended the winding stair, — "ah! to stay away, and leave me to my misery. It is hard; but it must be done: otherwise he will assuredly be captured and slain."

After stealing down an infinite number of dark passages, corridors, and stairways, she at length emerged into the open air, and glided through a neglected postern, out beneath a spreading beech-tree that shaded the inner edge of the moat, opposite the spot whence the signal of her lover proceeded. Again she peered into the gloom at the other side, and saw there a tall dark figure standing beneath a tree on the edge of the water. Well she knew the graceful outlines of that figure, and fondly her heart throbbed at the sound of the voice that now addressed her.

"Dearest," said the young mountain knight in a low tone, "I thought thou wouldst never come. I have been standing like a statue against the trunk of this tree behind me for the last half-hour, watch-

ing for a light in thy window-pane. But it seems that darkness pleases thee better. Ah, Eleanora! I hope thou art not still indulging in those sorrowful forebodings."

"And wherefore not, John?" answered she sadly. "What thoughts but gloomy ones can fill my mind, when I am ever thinking of the danger thou incurrest by coming here so often, — and thinking, too," she added, after a pause, "of the woful fate to which we are destined?"

"Think no more on't," said her lover, in a cheerful tone. "We have hope yet, Eleanora; for, mark me, thy marriage with Sir Edmond de Barnwell will never take place."

"Alas! there is no hope," resumed Eleanora. "Even to-day, my uncle, the Knight of Drimnagh, hath fixed the time for — to me — the woful bridal. And thou, John — let this be our last meeting, alas! in this world. Wert thou taken prisoner by my dark cousin, he hates thee so, that he would burn thee at a stake in the courtyard."

"Fear not for that, dearest," answered the young chief. "And this bridal that thou fearest. Listen, Eleanora. Before the hour comes, or, perchance, at the very hour when he is about to place the bridal-ring upon thy lily finger, the gay goshawk may swoop down, and bear thee away to his free mountains, amid their sunny glens and bosky woods, to love thee, darling, as no other mortal man could love thee."

“Ah me!” sighed poor Eleanora. “Would that it could be so! But I fear that we are fated to see each other for the last time to-night. I warn thee, John, to be wary henceforth; for I am well-watched. Hush! was that a foot-fall amid the grove yonder?” And she pointed to a clump of trees some distance to the right of where her lover stood.

“By my faith but it may be so!” answered he; “and so thou hadst better return to thy chamber. In the mean time, I will wait here till I see the light in thy window once more, and until thou biddest me farewell from the casement.”

Again they listened, and heard a slight rustling sound amid the trees to which Eleanora had pointed. It ceased; and then the fair Rose of Drimnagh, trembling at the thought of her fierce cousin, waved a fond farewell to her mountain lover, and, gliding once more through the postern, ascended the stairs to her chamber. But the bold Knight of Imayle was not to be frightened away by the sound, whatever might have caused it. He moved in beneath the shadow of the tree, listened for a time, and, hearing nothing further, advanced again, and looked up to where the light was now burning brightly in Eleanora’s window. Seating himself upon the side of the moat, in the shadow, and still looking fondly upward, he commenced, in a voice low, but distinct, a lay to his mistress, of which the following paraphrase may convey some idea: —

“Oh ! wilt thou come and be my bride ?
Oh ! wilt thou fly with me
Where wild streams glide by mountain-side,
By glen and forest-tree ?
And thou’lt be lady of that land,
And like a queen shalt reign
O’er shore and strand, and mountain grand,
And many a sunny plain !

I’ve found a lone and lovely cave
Where gleams a little lake ;
Where the wild rills fling the silver wave,
And the birds sing in the brake :
The lake gleams clear, the rills dance bright,
Down gorge and rocky pile ;
But the darkness of a starless night
Is in my soul the while.

And nought can light it, save a glance,
A beam, from thy jet-black eye ;
And nought can break my heart’s cold trance
Save thy witching song or sigh.
Then come ! I’ve decked that cave for thee
With summer’s fairest flowers ;
Away, away, o’er the hills with me,
To the forest glens and bowers !”

The moment the song had ceased, the fair form of the Rose of Drimnagh appeared at the casement overhead. She waved a fond farewell to her young mountain minstrel, and closed the window ; but the light that shone through its pane had now lost its charm for him, as he had no longer her fair face to look upon. He stood up, and, gazing once more

at the casement that glimmered like a star amid the dark masses of masonry above, turned to depart, when he felt the heavy grasp of a steel-clad hand upon his shoulder.

“Stay!” exclaimed the intruder in a deep, stern voice, whose tone the young Knight of Imayle knew but too well. “Thou hast a small account to settle, fair sir, ere thou leavest this spot. I am Sir Edmond De Barnwell.”

“And I,” answered the other, “am Sir John O’Byrne of Imayle: what seekest thou from me?”

“That thou shalt soon know, skulking hill-cat!” answered De Barnwell, unbuckling his sword, unsheathing it, and throwing belt and scabbard upon the ground. “There be a certain tide which men call blood, coursing beneath that breast-plate of thine. I seek to discover its fount with this;” and he extended his weapon.

“There be a certain tide behind thee which thou art more likely to explore presently!” retorted O’Byrne. “Ha, ha! beware the hill-cat’s spring, De Barnwell!” and he gave a sudden bound that brought him inside the guard of his antagonist, whose waist he instantly encircled with his sinewy arms. There was an ineffectual attempt to pluck forth their daggers; and then Sir Edmond De Barnwell was hurled from the stalwart arms of the brave Knight of Imayle, and sent plunging headlong into the black waters of the moat. Leaving his foe to scramble as best he could from his dangerous

bath in the fosse, O'Byrne glided through the thickets, and sought his steed, which he had left in a lonely grove hard by, and was soon riding in headlong haste across the plain towards the stern mountain barrier that lay between him and his native glens. And now De Barnwell, after extricating himself with great difficulty from the treacherous waters, stood, all dripping, upon the firm bank; his burly frame quivering, not from the chill of his immersion, but from fury at his mishap. Pursuit of his late antagonist was, he knew, of little use now; so, plucking up his sword which lay beside him, he raised the cold steel blade to his lips, kissed it, vowed a stern vow of vengeance against O'Byrne and his race, root and branch; and then, striding down by the water's side, crossed the drawbridge, and sought his chamber, where he sat, till long after midnight, brooding over various plans of merciless and bloody retribution.

The particulars of his subsequent cruel raid into the glens of Wicklow it is unnecessary to relate; and we shall now come to the day which his father had fixed upon for the marriage. It was early in the morning; and the fair Rose of Drimnagh, surrounded by her lovely maids, looked sadly upon the gorgeous white bridal-dress which lay on a table beside her, and which she was at last about to put on.

"Ah me!" she sighed mournfully, "that it hath come to this! In vain have I watched for him to

appear in his accustomed place by the moat; but his promise is broken: and what could have broken it but death?" And the tears gathered into her eyes as she thought thus of her lover.

"Cheer thee, Eleanora!" said her cousin, a young and gay city dame. "I warrant thee that such a bridal as thine was never seen in Dublin: I only wish I were in thy place."

"Alas that thou art not!" returned Eleanora. "Something tells me that what thou sayest is but too true,—that such a bridal as mine was never seen." And with the help of her maids she now began to don the dress.

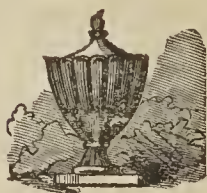
The marriage was to take place in the city; and Sir Edmond de Barnwell had summoned his kinsmen of the Pale, with all their fierce retainers, in order to strengthen his escort for the bridal-train, which at last, in splendid array, crossed the draw-bridge of Drimnagh, and moved along the winding road that led to the western gate of Dublin. This road was crossed by another, midway between the castle and the city, and within a wood which stretched down from the mountains to the shores of the Liffey. About half the bridal-train had passed the cross; and the remainder, with the bride and bridegroom before them, were moving gayly forward, when all at once the wild war-cry of the O'Byrnes resounded from the wood all around, and the next instant a large body of men, headed by the young Knight of Imayle, sprang from their concealment,

and fell upon the escort front, rear, and flank. It is needless to go minutely into the details of the terrible fight that then took place at the Minstrel's Cross, as the spot was called. The escort were at first put to flight and pursued by the O'Byrnes; but, returning again to the charge, the light kern of the mountains were borne down by their heavy horses, though they fought it out bravely to the last. The Knight of Imayle, after badly wounding the bridegroom, was shot through the heart by the old Lord of Drimnagh, as he attempted to seize the bridle of Eleanora's palfrey. This ended the fray. The body of the young knight was borne away by his followers, and buried in the lonely graveyard that lay amid the mountains. The bridal-train, instead of proceeding to Dublin, returned to the Castle of Drimnagh, where Sir Edmond de Barnwell was laid upon a bed from which he never rose.

Three days after the fatal battle at the Minstrel's Cross, Eleanora disappeared from the Castle of Drimnagh. Search was made for her throughout the surrounding country, and even in the neighboring city; but it was of no avail: she was nowhere to be found. At length a party of the O'Byrnes, who were driving a creaght of cattle across the mountains, halted beside the solitary churchyard to pay a visit to their young chief, and, upon the fresh sod that lay above his gallant breast, found the lifeless body of the ill-fated Rose of Drimnagh. They hollowed her a

grave beside her lover; and there, in the words of the old ballad, —

“ These loving hearts by fortune blighted,
By sorrow tried full sore,
In life apart, in death united,
Sleep side by side forevermore.”





THE HOUSE OF LISBLOOM.

A. LEGEND OF SARSFIELD.

CHAPTER I.

SHOWING HOW ELLIE CONNELL SENDS NEWS OF HERSELF
TO HER LOVER. — CONTAINING ALSO THE FIGHT BETWEEN
GALLOPING O'HOGAN AND THE CAPTAIN OF BLUE DRAGOONS
IN THE SWAMP OF MONA.

BETWEEN two of the abrupt hills which shoot out upon the Limerick plain from the wild range of Sliav Bloom, there is a deep pass communicating with level country on each side, and sending down a noisy stream to swell the waters of the Mulkern, that winds far beyond into the Shannon. To the careless or ignorant observer, this pass presents little to distinguish it from the many in its neighborhood, save its somewhat greater depth and barrenness; but it will at once strike a person having even a slight knowledge of the art military as a spot of much importance in time of war. In the latter point of view, indeed, it seems to have been

looked upon by the contending parties in the various struggles that desolated this island in former times: and well they might so regard it; for, besides leading directly to an ancient ford across the Shannon, it formed the safest outlet from the fruitful plains that lay, with all their towns and strong military positions, to the eastward.

As you proceed up the pass, about midway between its two extremities, a huge mound rises before you, with the small stream half encircling its base. On the summit lie a heap of grass-covered ruins, surrounded by half-obliterated outworks, and a deep, dry ditch, that, with its bristling palisadoes, must have once formed a formidable barrier against the entrance of a foe. These ruins are the remains of what, about a century and a half ago, was a fortified and very strong mansion, called the House of Lisbloom.

This house, during the various wars, often changed masters; and at the period to which our story relates was in the possession of a man whom, of all others, and for very plain reasons, the surrounding peasantry least relished as its lord. His name was Gideon Grimes. The father of the worthy Gideon was an undertaker; that is, an English settler, who had made his home in that part of the country after the termination of the Cromwellian wars, and there, amidst the conquests of his bow and spear, had amused himself by occasionally hunting Rapparees, and, when successful in the

chase, hanging the poor fugitives without trial to the next handy tree. The bold Gideon himself followed for a time with a high hand in the footsteps of his departed and redoubtable sire; but with this difference, that, whereas the defunct Roundhead was consistent, and sternly held to his principle of exterminating the poor Irishry by the sword alone, the more sagacious son adopted, in the lapse of time, a safer and more peaceful method of venting his hatred upon his war-broken neighbors. Making use of the terrible laws, which, of course, were all on his side, he succeeded in driving several of the poor farmers around to beggary and death, and, seizing their holdings, thus enriched himself and gratified his inborn hatred of the unfortunate peasantry at the same time.

One instance will suffice to show the methods used by Black Gideon, — for so he was called by the people, — one, too, that had an important bearing upon his after fate. It happened that his next neighbor was a farmer, named Murrogh Connell, whose ancestors had been gentlemen of large property, but who having been broken “horse and foot,” as they say, during the great rebellion and the previous troubles, had left Murrogh the possessor of only a farm, — a rich and large one, however, at the entrance of the pass of Lisbloom. On this farm Black Gideon had long cast his rapacious eye, concocting various plans for obtaining possession of it, all of which, in one way or another, failed.

At last one of his spies came to him with the valuable information that a number of old pikes and matchlocks lay concealed in a ruinous barn belonging to poor Murrogh Connell's farmstead. This was enough. Gideon brought the law down like a sledge-hammer upon his unfortunate neighbor, ruined him, and was just on the point of turning him out of his farm, when the Williamite revolution commenced, the Battle of the Boyne was fought, and the retreating Irish armies took possession of the south of Ireland. This gave a short respite to Murrogh Connell. But the second siege of Limerick commenced; and the Williamites, in their turn, occupied all the country to the south and east. So, feeling himself once more in power, Black Gideon drove out Murrogh, who, with his herds of cattle, betook himself to the wild mountains of Sliav Bloom, and commenced the life of a kyriaght, or wandering grazier of cattle.

About a week after Murrogh's flight to the mountains, his only daughter, Ellie, a beautiful young girl, walked down one evening to fetch water from a spring near their camping-place, but never returned. Search was made for her far and near, but never a trace of her could be found; and, with bleeding hearts, her father, her two brothers, and Tibbot Burke, a young gentleman to whom she was betrothed a year previously, at length returned and told the sad tale to her mother. Suspicion indeed fell upon Gideon Grimes who, it was re-

marked, had cast his eye upon her as well as upon her father's lands; but nothing certain regarding him or his proceedings could be gathered by her friends, notwithstanding that they watched him closely.

One bright autumn noon the sun glittered from the spades, shovels, and hammers of a number of men whom Black Gideon had employed to build up the breaches in the outworks of his mansion in the pass, in order to secure himself from the bands of Rapparees who hung around the Williamite army, then commencing its operations upon the gallant city of Limerick. One of these laborers was a diminutive, brown-skinned, wiry-looking young fellow, who, by the way he handled his spade, seemed no very diligent workman in the cause of Gideon. Under a remote gable-end of the house, he was employed clearing away some rubbish and weeds; and, as he worked lazily under the blaze of the hot sun, he solaced himself occasionally with a little conversation addressed to himself, interspersed with some fragments of ballad poetry, the fag-ends of which he ornamented with various delectable choruses that seemed, from the way he doubled and trebled and again dwelt upon them, to soothe his spirit mightily under his distressing labor.

"Wisha, may the blessed fingers fall off o'me," exclaimed he at length, as he struck his spade against some loose stones at the base of the wall, "if I haven't found the very thing I wanted!"

He looked cautiously round him. The laborers were all so busy at the outward wall that they could not observe him. "Dhar Dhia!" continued he, as he bent the tall nettles that concealed the spot aside with his spade, and examined the spot with his black, glittering eyes. "Lord have marcy on us, if id isn't the very hole that my grandfather entered wid his men when he killed every livin' sowl o' the bloody Parliamenthers that held Lisbloom long ago in the time o' Crummill! Aisy a bit, Cus Russid! P'raps the time will come when you'll do as well as your bowld grandfather, — rest his sowl in glory this blessed day, amin! — an burn the house over Black Gideon an' his murtherin' villains. There's a doore for the brave Rapparees, an' ids myself that'll soon take the news to them fresh and fastin'." And with that he carefully arranged the long nettles again, and recommenced his work and his song.

While Cus Russid — we will give him the cognomen used by himself, which means Brown Foot — was hanging on one of the most Elysian bars of a certain chorus, he heard his name pronounced in a low, sweet voice from the single window above him in the gable, and on looking up beheld the prettiest face imaginable, shaded with rich masses of yellow hair, bent upon him with an eager and frightened gaze from between the strong iron bars.

"Tundher alive, if id isn't Ellie Connell herself!" exclaimed he, wheeling round, and resting on his spade, "Oh, wirra, wirra! is id here I find you?"

"Hush!" said Ellie, for it was she: "I have but a moment. If you love my father's house, Cus Russid, away with you, not to my father or brothers, for they can do nothing, I fear, but to my uncle O'Hogan and Tibbot Burke, and tell them that I am here!" And the casement was shut instantly, and Ellie's face withdrawn.

"May the four bones wither in my brown car-kiss," said Cus Russid, "if I don't find them soon an' suddint for you!" And with that he cast his spade from him; and slinking over, like a fox, to a half-filled gap in the outworks, he crossed the ditch, unobserved by his companions, and soon gained the wood that clothed the opposite side of the pass.

On reaching the summit of the ridgy hill that formed the western flank of the pass, Cus Russid walked deliberately to a thicket beneath a rock, and took therefrom an ashen staff, like a pike-handle, with a small iron ring at one end, to which was attached a piece of strong twine with a loop at its extremity. Again he dived his hand into the ferns, and pulled out a thick frieze cothamore, in which he instantly arrayed himself. He then put his hand into an inside pocket of the cotha, and drew forth a long, bright spear-head; and, after gazing upon it with great comfort for a moment, replaced it in its hiding-place, turned, and shook his fist at the house of Lisbloom, and then, gradually sliding from a walk into a trot, went at a formidable pace across the country to the westward.

After travelling thus for about a dozen miles, he at length sat down upon a height, and looked over a winding road that led directly towards him through the woody country from the north-west. Advancing along this road he soon perceived a troop of Williamite cavalry, with a large glittering cannon in their midst. It would have been the most natural thing in the world for Cus Russid to run away at such a sight. He did no such thing, however; but, on the contrary, using his spear-handle for a walking-staff, he descended the height, and advanced boldly along the road to meet them.

"What's your name, my man?" said the commander of the troop, as they came up. "Come, out with it and your business too, for no man passes here unquestioned."

"Wisha!" answered Cus, with a look of wonderful sheepishness and simplicity: "they calls me Cus Russid, sir, by raison o' these misforthunate brown feet I have upon me. Bud maybe your honor didn't see any cattle about here, for my masther sint me every morthial step from the House o' Lisbloom to look for them. Bad luck to them, 'tis a sore an' sorrowful journey they're givin' me!"

"It is strange that we happen to be going to the very place he speaks of," said the commander to the young officer that rode beside him. "Tell me, boy," continued he, turning to Cus, "is it far to Lisbloom?"

"'Tis a sore journey, sir," answered the latter.

“But maybe you’re the ginerall that’s goin’ to defend id for Misther Gideon Grimes against the Rap-parees; for if you are — there! I see the cattle beyant there in the wood, an’ I’ll just go an’ dhrive them up; and then if I don’t lade you in pace an’ quietness up to the very gate o’ Lisbloom.”

“Pass on then, and be soon back,” said the captain, as he turned and followed his troop.

“Yes, pass on,” muttered Cus, after meeting two dragoons who rode at a good distance behind; “but wait till I come to the rereguard, an’, be the sowl o’ my father! I’ll give you a different story to tell, you murtherin robber.”

The dragoon who formed the extreme rearguard seemed to have, from some cause or other, lagged behind. Cus Russid therefore had full time for preparation. He took out his spear-head, stuck it carefully on his ashen shaft, and there fastened it by means of a small screw. Then, like a wolf awaiting his prey, he darted down into a hollow, and there crouching amid the copse, with blazing eyes and clenched teeth, glared out upon the lonely road. The unsuspecting dragoon at length rode merrily up; but, as he passed, the deadly spear whizzed out from the bush, and struck him beneath the helmet on the neck. Almost before he reached the ground in his fall, Cus Russid had plucked the spear from his bleeding neck, with one bound was on his horse, and tearing away like a demon at a furious gallop across the country.

Finding that he was not pursued, after nearly half a dozen miles' mad riding, Cus Russid slackened the pace of the strong troop-horse, and rode along with a light and contented heart over the level plain, with every rood of which he seemed to be intimately acquainted. It was sunset when he gained the verge of a thick and extensive wood, that stretched along the base and up the sides of a rugged mountain. Once more putting his horse to a brisk gallop, he dashed along a tangled pathway, and at last emerged into a little sylvan valley with a beautiful stream gurgling down through its bosom. At the foot of a steep, limestone rock, that jutted out to within a few yards of the rivulet, he beheld three men sitting under a spreading oak-tree, two of whom he instantly recognized. The one nearest to him, as he rode up, was a young man of very handsome presence, tall, lithe, and brown-haired, and armed with carbine, sword, and pistol. His corselet and morion, in the latter of which was stuck a spray of green fern by way of a plume, glittered in the red beams of the sun, as he sat with a drinking-flask in his hand upon the bank over the water. The other was a man nearly forty years of age, of somewhat low stature, but herculean build of frame, and with an oval face rendered almost black by exposure to the suns of many climates. He was armed like his younger comrade, with the exception of his sword; which, from the size of its scabbard, seemed of unusual length and weight.

The third, whom Cus did not recognize, was a man of far taller stature than the young man above mentioned, of a nobler and more commanding aspect, and with an eye that seemed to pierce to the very marrow of the brown-footed messenger, as the latter now sprang from his horse, and walked forward towards the tree.

“Captain,” said Cus Russid, as he approached the dark-visaged man, “I have bad news for you.”

O’Hogan, or Galloping O’Hogan, as he was usually called, — for it was that gallant captain, — started to his feet, and bent his keen, black eyes upon Cus.

“What is it?” asked he. “There seems to be nothing but bad news for us now-a-days, poor Brown Foot.”

“Your niece, Ellie Connell, is in the hands of Black Gideon o’ Lisbloom, — bad luck to him, seed, breed, an’ gination, I say, amen! — an’ she towld me to tell you, for your life, to release her soon an’ suddint.”

“This is pleasant news for you, Tibbot Burke,” said O’Hogan to his younger companion. “But no matter. We will set Ellie free, and put Black Gideon’s house in order sooner, I dare swear, than he reckons. The place this boy mentions, my lord,” continued he, turning to the other, — “Lisbloom, is the house that commands the important pass I mentioned to you. We will see to it to-morrow or next day. In the meantime, we had better arrange our bivouac and go to sleep, after our hard day’s

ride ; for we have much before us on the morrow. Cus, my boy, attend to your horse, which seems in a sad state, — see, ours are picquetted in the wood, — and then come hither ; for you must keep the first watch.”

In half an hour after, they were asleep, Cus Russid standing sentinel beneath the tree.

The sun of the next morning found them far away from their camping-place, riding on at a brisk trot towards the east, and all laughing heartily at Cus Russid’s account of his capture of the troop-horse. They were now approaching on their right the verge of a great marsh, called the Swamp of Mona, many miles in extent, and with a sluggish river*oozing down lazily through its centre. The track on which they rode wound along the bosky skirt of a wood, which, at some distance in advance, sent out its thickets and scattered trees to within about a mile of the low verge of the swamp. O’Hogan, who was somewhat in advance, suddenly reined up the stoutly-built but rather small nag he rode, and pointed to this projection of the wood. As he did so, they beheld the vanguard and advance column of an army slowly emerging into the sunlight, their arms glittering and flashing, and their banners fluttering gayly in the buxom breeze of the blithe autumn morning.

“My lord,” exclaimed O’Hogan, riding back to him whom he addressed, “you see we have raised the men of Kerry in good time against the invasion

of General Tettau. There he is with a vengeance ! There are his savage Danish infantry and his blue Dutch dragoons ! ”

“ For a verity, I believe it is so,” answered the other. “ But we must be now quick to act, or we stand a good chance of having an audience of the Dutchman. My brave captain, as you claim to be general on this side of the Shannon, you must direct me what to do on the moment; for you know it would not serve the cause of the king to have me taken prisoner in an hour or so.”

“ Away with you, then, my lord, — you and my lieutenant, Tibbot, and Brown Foot, round the marsh to the other side; and there wait till I rejoin you.”

“ And you,” answered the other: “ surely you are not thinking of one of your mad but gallant exploits this morning; surely you are not rash enough to go forward ? ”

“ Leave that to me,” answered O’Hogan laughing. “ As you yourself say, I am general here, my lord; so take my word of command for the present. Right about wheel, and away ! ” And, with that, he gave the spur to his nag and dashed forward; while his companions, after watching him for a moment, galloped off in the opposite direction, so as to get round the swamp, and put themselves at a safe distance from General Tettau and his army.

Meanwhile the bold Rapparee captain tore over the moorland, not, however, directly forward, but obliquely down to the verge of the swamp; and, as

he came opposite the flank of the column, halted, and coolly commenced to count the number of their cannon, and to estimate the strength of the enemy. It seemed to tickle their fancy mightily that a single man should thus put himself in such dangerous proximity to them, with a broad marsh behind him; for in a few moments, with a shout of laughter, an officer and about a dozen men dashed out from the regiment of blue dragoons, and came at a thundering pace across the moor towards O'Hogan. But they little knew the man they had to deal with. The Rapparee, after finishing his observations, turned his nag to the marsh, — both horse and rider knew it well, — and began to flit over it with the lightness of a plover. The pursuers at length came down; and, plashing heavily into the marsh, there soon stuck and floundered up to their saddle-girths, all except their captain, who seemed to be more accustomed to the thing, and who now led his horse warily after O'Hogan. The latter at length gained a broad, dry spot towards the centre of the swamp, and there, turning round his broad-chested nag, coolly waited the coming of his foe, who, after a few mishaps and several volleys of outlandish oaths, also gained the verge of the dry space. They were now within pistol-shot, the Dutch captain advancing cautiously on his heavy steed.

“Surrender, base hund!” shouted the latter, as he drew his long pistols from the holsters, and presented them at O'Hogan.

“Ha, ha!” answered the Rapparee: “you’ll have to take me first, mynheer. Come on, then, for the honor of Vaterland, old beer-swiller, and try yourself against the four bones of an Irishman.”

For answer, the bullets from the two pistols went whistling, one after the other, by O’Hogan’s ear.

“Now, on the good faith of a man,” exclaimed O’Hogan, “I would rather, where there are only two of us, that you had stuck to the sword alone to decide between us, like a gentleman!” And, with that, he drew his long weapon from its sheath, and with his dark brows knit, and eyes flashing, sat prepared for the onset of the Dutchman.

“May de deevil seize thee for a damned Rapparee sehelm!” roared the latter, as he thundered down upon O’Hogan, intending to ride over him, horse and man, with his heavy charger.

But O’Hogan expected this, and was prepared for it. Swerving his nag nimbly to one side, he allowed the Dutchman to rush by; and as he passed, after parrying his cut, struck him on the corselet, between the shoulders, with a force that bent him forward on the flying mane of his steed. The Dutchman, however, recovered himself, and came on gallantly once more.

“I could shoot you like a dog,” said O’Hogan, tapping his holster sternly with his left hand; “but no, I believe you to be a brave man after all. Come on, then, closer, closer, and let the good sword settle it between us.”

In a moment the bright weapons crossed, and clashed against each other, striking sparks of fire by their deadly contact; the horses swerved round and round; again the swords clashed, till at length the long blade of the Rapparee went sheer through the side of the ill-fated Dutchman, who dropped from his charger with a heavy thud upon the boggy sward beneath. Tettau had watched the combat keenly; for, in a few moments after his officer fell, the heavy boom of a cannon tore through the clear morning air, and the shot, intended for O'Hogan, struck, instead, the poor Dutchman's charger upon the spine, and hurled it a shattered mass beside the body of its dying master.

O'Hogan, with a grim smile, shook his gory sword at the hostile army, then turned his steed, and flitted once more across the swamp, beyond the range of their cannon-shot.

CHAPTER II.

IN WHICH SARSFIELD ARRIVES NEAR THE GATE OF TIR-N-AN-OGHE, AND HEARS A ROMANCE FROM BROWN FOOT. — CONTAINING ALSO THE ADVENTURE OF THE GRAY KNIGHT'S CHAMBER.

THERE was a little book called "The History of the Irish Rogues and Rapparees," which the author happened to read in his boyhood, but on which,

happily for himself, he was not left dependent for information concerning the individuals whose lives were misrepresented therein. The book had a very extensive circulation among the peasantry; and it is astonishing the number of opinions it influenced regarding the history of the times immediately following the Williamite conquest of this land, and the actions of the gallant men who fought for their homes and their religion against the psalm-twanging, snivelling, and murderous undertakers, and against the penal laws then in the flush and first swing of their gory vigor and brutality. The sorry-spirited sinner who wrote the book represents the Rapparees as a pack of ferocious bogtrotters, pickpockets, highwaymen, and murderers; whereas, on the contrary, if the truth were known, they were a stout peasantry, led on by their hereditary captains, gallant and noble gentlemen, who, when dispossessed of their lands by the conqueror, took to the sword and gun as their only chance of existence, and on many a hill-side, and in the depths of many a forest and pass, poured out their life-blood trying to regain their ancient patrimonies, or, at least, endeavoring to wreak honorable vengeance upon the robbers who held them in their iron grasp. In England, the free-born Saxon thanes, who took to the woods after the Norman conquest, are celebrated in many a stirring lay, and the actions of the brave Spanish hidalgos, who fought against the Moors, sung in innumerable melodious ballads; but the

poor Irish gentlemen, who shed their blood in the Williamite wars, are only vilified and misrepresented, though they were not a whit less gallant, hardy, or chivalrous than the *Cids* of Spain or the Robin Hoods of the sister island. With this preamble, which we hope the reader will excuse, we will now resume our story.

O'Hogan, whose nag seemed to know by instinct the firm parts of the swamp, was not long in gaining the dry and rising country to the south, where, on a green knoll beneath a clump of trees, he rejoined his companions, who had thence watched with anxious hearts the issue of the combat.

"Ha! you are back at last," said the elder horseman, as O'Hogan rode up. "You had a narrow escape, captain; but, on the good faith of a soldier, it was a brave exploit, though a little hair-brained for a man of my temperament."

"You are not always in the same mood, then, my lord," answered O'Hogan, laughing; "for it was only last year I saw you perform an exploit equal in daring to a thousand of mine just now. I did it, however, to show you the manner in which Tettau will be welcomed by the bold Rapparees of Kerry. It was not my first meeting with the Dutch blue-jackets; and I hope to make them know me better before the war is over."

"I remember your first meeting with them well," remarked Tibbot Burke. "My lord, if I don't mistake, you must recollect it too. It was at the wo-

ful field of Aughrim, and on the shoulder of Kilcommodan Hill," continued he, as they rode forward again. "O'Hogan and I were beyond the brow of the height, at the head of the irregular Rapparee horse, when the first troop of blue dragoons swept past us, down on the flying Irish infantry, after St. Ruth's fall. We gave them but little time to play their sabres; for we swept, in turn, down upon their rear with a clatter and a crash that they, too, will not forget."

"I also shall not forget it," said their companion, with a sad smile; "for that gallant charge aided me well in saving the remnant of our broken army."

"Who is he at all?" muttered Cus Russid to himself, as he rode close behind, listening to the conversation. "Be this blessed stick!" continued he, laying his hand upon the huge pommel of the dragoon saddle, in which he sat perched like a hawk, "but he talks as big as if he was the greatest general on the universal earth." He was not left long in doubt.

"Aye, my brave fellows," continued the subject of his inquiries, "and I shall not soon forget the brave dash you both made at my side when we rattled down that night upon the English convoy at Ballineety."

"An' cut them into mince-mate an' smithereens, bad luck to their souls!" interrupted Cus Russid, more loudly than he was aware of in his surprise. "Honom-an-dhial! but 'tis Sarsfield himself, an' I

have been talkin' to him all the mornin' just as if he was born a commerade o' my own!"

"And cut them into mince-meat, as our little friend behind us observes," continued Sarsfield, laughing (for it was he); "and destroyed their baggage and cannon,—a thing I never could have done, were it not for the sure intelligence you gave me of the enemy's movements. But what road are we taking?" rejoined he, as he cast his bright eyes over a tract of country, where, a few miles in their front, an abrupt hill towered up, with a calm lake gleaming in the sunlight at its foot. "Now that my mission in the country is accomplished, and that I have seen what you can do in the rear of the enemy, I should be crossing the Shannon once more for Limerick, where, I fear, I am sadly wanted at the present juncture."

"Your mission is not entirely over, my lord," answered O'Hogan. "You have yet to see the men of East Limerick and the Tipperary borders, and to give them encouragement by your presence for a day or two. For the rest, we shall guide you safely across the Shannon, above Limerick, not below it; which latter would not be an easy task in the present disposition of Ginkel's troops. The water you see beyond is Lough Gur, a place frequently visited by the foraging parties of the English. To the front, then, Tibbot; and you, Brown Foot, fall back farther to the rear, and keep those black eyes of yours on every bush and thicket around, for we must be careful."

In this order they soon gained the shore of Lough Gur. Riding warily round the foot of the hill that towered above it to the north, they at length came to the eastern end of the lake; and there, at the side of a shaggy wood, they dismounted, and sat down to regale themselves from Tibbot's flask and the wallet of provisions he had carried all the morning at his saddle-bow.

Having satisfied their hunger, they looked around for Cus Russid, whose newly-awakened modesty would not permit him to sit down and join in their noonday meal; and, after a little search, found that inquisitive individual half-way up the hill, and peering with much apparent interest into a hollow recess between two boulders of rock.

"What were you looking for at the rock, Cus?" asked Tibbot of Brown Foot, as the latter, after being recalled to their resting-place; was in the agreeable process of finishing his repast.

"Wisha, faith, if the truth must be towld, sir," answered Cus, "I was just sarchin' for the doore through which my uncle, Rody Condon, got into Tir-n-an-Oge. 'Tis a quare story, an' will make you laugh, if I may make so bowld as to tell it."

"Clear your throat first with the flask before you commence, boy," said Sarsfield, smiling. "It will enliven your story, and mayhap enable you to add something of your own to the thread."

"In the whole barony, there wasn't a quarer man than my uncle Rody," rejoined Cus Russid, thus en-

couraged. "He never went out in his life afther nightfall that he didn't see a ghost,—Lord athune us an' harum!—or a sperrit o' some kind or other. The Headless Man o' Drumdhorn an' himself were ould acquaintances; an', as for the Green Woman o' Tiernan's Ford an' he, they were like brother an' sisther. The Good People—wid respect I purnounce their name this blessed day—loved him as if they were his born childher; an' good raison they ought, for he never went out on a journey high or low idout takin' a cruiskeen o' whiskey in one pocket of his cothamore, an' a drinkin'-horn in the other, to thrate them, the crathures, when cowl'd or thirsty. Many a drinkin'-bout they had together in the ould fourths an' castles by the lake, endin' every one o' them in their promisin' to take him to Tir-n-an-Oge,—for he was morthial aiger to get a glimpse o' the doins there,—an' then puttin' him to sleep an' stalin' the whiskey,—small blame to them for that, anyhow!

"Well, at any rate, one Novimber eve, as he was comin' home from Bruff, after sellin' four pigs of his agin the winther, he sat down beyant there by the lake, an' drew out his cruiskeen an' dhrinkin'-horn to relieve himself from the cowl'd; for 'twas a frosty night. Afther, maybe, takin' about twice the full o' the horn, he saw comin' crass the hill towards him a little ould atomy of a man, not much higher than my knee, an' all dhressed in gray to the very caubeen upon his head.

“‘Wisha, much good may id do you, that same cruiskeen, Rody!’ said the little man, comin’ down, an’ plantin’ himself fornint my uncle on the grass. ‘Would you like to see Tir-n-an-Oge to-night?’

“‘You know I would, Traneen Glas,’ said my uncle (for they seemed to be ould friends); ‘an’ many is the time, you schamer, you dissaved me on the head o’ seein’ it too. But a cead mille failthe for all that, Traneen! Rody Condon isn’t the man to give a frind the cowl’d showldher while there’s a sup in the cruiskeen. Here is health an’ happiness, an’ may the wheels of our carriages rowl on pavements o’ diamond!’

“‘The same to you, Rody,’ said Traneen Glas, afther he had emptied the dhrinkin’-horn in his turn. ‘’Tis a rale sweet dhrop, anyhow. An’ now let us be off to Tir-n-an-Oge.’

“‘The devil resave the morsel of us will stir out o’ this till we empty the cruiskeen at any rate,’ said my uncle; an’ with that they tackled to, an’ never stopped nor stayed till all the whiskey was gone.

“The minnit the last dhrop was swallowed, Traneen Glas clapped his hands together with a sound like tundher. Then a whirlwind came roarin’ up from the lake; an’, spinnin’ my uncle round an’ round, it drove him like a cannon-ball in through a great doore that opened bethune the rocks beyant there. It took away his breath an’ eye-sight, it was so loud an’ terrible; but at last it ceased, an’ my uncle looked around an’ found himself standin’ on the

verge of a great green forest, in the midst of the most beautiful counthry the sun ever shone upon. 'Tis Tir-n-an-Oge every inch of it,' said my uncle, as he went on an' on through the forest, till at last he came to a great meadow. All over this meadow were ranged thousands upon thousands of knights on horesback, their great spears stuck in the ground beside them, their hands upon their soord-hilts an' their armor glittherin'; but all seemed to be asleep, an' as still an' motionless as the ould figures upon the tombstones in Kilmallock. At their head sat a great lord all in goolden armor, with his hand also upon the dazzlin' handle of his soord.

"'Mille gloria! if it isn't Garodh Earla an' his knights I'm lookin' upon!' said my uncle. The mighty earl awoke at the voice.

"'Is the hour come, Rody Condon?' said he, in a great voice that went echoin' through the forest; an' with that he half dhrew his soord from the scabbard.

"'Wisha, faith, my lord, 'tis nearly come!' answered my uncle; 'for them bloody undhertakers are spilin' an' robbin' in the worldt above, an' murtherin' us all like wild bastes. But wait till I come back from seein' my frinds, an' thin, if you considher it time, my sowl to glory if I don't show you the way out; for the Sassenachs want a taste of some o' them long soords badly!'

"With that my uncle passed on—bad scrán to him! for if he answered an' said the hour was come,

Garodh Earla an' all his knights would be back here in the twinklin' of an eye, an' 'tis short work they'd make o' the Sassenachs if they came. On an' on he went, till in the bottom of a green valley he came fornint a grand house; an' his heart leapt with joy when he heard the people inside rattlin' up 'Garryowen' with a chorus that seemed to shake the very rafters.

"'Be this stick!' said he, 'but they seem to be refreshin' themselves inside anyhow. I'll just step in, an' p'rhaps it's a cead mille failthe I'd get to Tir-n-an-Oge from some one!'

"He did so; an' the first person he saw inside was his cousin, Johnnie Harty, who, with a number of his commerrades that my uncle knew as ould frinds, sat around a table o' diamond stone regalin' themselves on metheglin.

"'Wisha! a thousand welcomes to Tir-n-an-Oge, Rody,' said his cousin. 'Here, take a jorum o' this to refresh yourself, an' then p'raps you'd tell us some news from the worldt above.'

"'I'll tell you one thing,' said my uncle, afther emptying the cup, 'this is a sweet drink sure enough, an' p'raps fit for yourselves; but, if you don't give me somethin' stroinger to wet my windpipe on this blessed Novimber night, I'll die with the druth. I'd rather have one glass o' Tom Fraher's potheen than a whole gallon o' this wake thrash!'

"'Well,' said his cousin, 'we can give you nothin' stronger at present, Rody; but haven't you any news?

“‘Devil a much,’ said my uncle, ‘an’ so I’ll let it alone till I hear what kind of a counthry this is to live in ; for I mane to come an’ settle here as soon as I can, if it shuits me, which I think it will to a T.’

“‘’Tis a wondherful place,’ answered Johnnie. ‘The first place you saw belongs to Garodh Earla, this to us, an’ that beyant there to the Fenians of Erinn. Come, boys, let us show the place to my cousin, Rody Condon.’

“With that they all stood up, an’ conducted Rody beyant their own boundary into another part, where he saw all the Fenians of Erinn encamped upon a hill ; some engaged in wrestlin’ matches, an’ bouts with soords an’ all that, an’ some preparing for the chase of a great stag that kept the forest beneath.

“‘Where’s Cuchullin?’ asked Rody.

“‘There he’s over at the edge of the camp leanin’ on his spear,’ answered his cousin ; ‘an’ there is Curigh MacDaire standin’ beside him. They’re the best frinds now, although in the worldt above they often had a rattlin’ fight about the beautiful Blanaid, who lives now over there in that bright palace above the stream.’

“‘Wisha ! faith then,’ said Rody, ‘’tis little she disarved a palace for lavin’ her lawful husband, Curigh, to fly with Cuchullin. If things are carried on in this way, the devil a fut o’ me will stay here for one. Haven’t ye a single dhrop o’ the crathur to wet a poor fellow’s whistle afther his long journey?’

“ ‘Not a taste but metheglin,’ they all answered.

“ ‘Well, that settles the question,’ said Rody, givin’ his cuthamore a shake. ‘Dang the bit o’ me, will ever stay in a counthry where there isn’t a dhrop o’ potheen to be had for love or money.’

“The word was scarcely out of his mouth when the whirlwind caught him up again, an’ he was tossed an’ tumbled an’ rowld between its roarin’ wings out upon the very spot where he had sat down some time before to refresh himself. He felt for his cruiskeen, but found it empty.

“ ‘Well,’ said he, as he stood up an’ began to walk home, ‘the fairies must have played a thrick on me, — bad luck to Traneen Glas, that little imp o’ perdition ! He an’ his commerades drank what was in the cruiskeen, but it is a long time till they catch me again on Novimber night.’

“ ‘An’ so that, my lord, is what happened to my uncle,” concluded Cus Russid ; “but wait till I find out the door into Tir-n-an-Oge, an’ once set my eyes on Garodh Earla an’ his mighty warriors, if”——

He was not allowed to finish his sentence ; for in an instant there was a rush from the trees behind them, and, before they could turn or gain their feet, poor Cus and his companions were seized by a number of men, disarmed and pinioned, and, with horse-cloths thrown over their faces, dragged through the wood despite their struggles, and at length thrown rudely into a confined place like a cavern, where, when they succeeded in shaking the rough

cloths from before their eyes, they endeavored to look round, but found themselves in total darkness. Tibbot, who happened to be the last thrust in, put out his hand, as well as he could, to feel for some support, and rested it against, what seemed to him, a wall composed of huge stones placed one upon the other in the manner of those cyclopean structures, some of which are yet found in the country. Through a chink between two of these blocks of stone, a low, sharp voice now grated on his ear, like the hiss of a serpent : —

“Remember Ellie Connell, base Rapparee dog,” said the voice in accents that Tibbot knew but too well, “and remember also how you crossed my path when it led to her love. Vengeance is in my hand at last ; and, as sure as there is a hell beneath you, you and your companions shall swing from the best branch in the wood before set of sun.”

“Try it,” answered Tibbot, as he wrenched the cords that bound his arms asunder. Ha ! my arms are now free ; and, when you come for us, you will find us hard to take. Miscreant undertaker ! you will pay dearly for this, if you come within reach of me, even as I now stand unarmed.”

“Heed him not, Tibbot,” said O’Hogan, creeping over to his lieutenant, in order to get his arms also unbound. “Gideon Grimes,” he continued, as he felt his arms free, “I was often in a worse strait than this, and trust I shall live to pay you back the deep debt I owe you.”

"Think of it not," answered Gideon, in a mocking voice through the chink. "Think only that you are in safe custody here; that your niece is safe under lock and key in Lisbloom; that my vengeance is in high train at last, and that you are to be hung this eventide as high as Haman, for I have sent for the ropes that are to settle all debts between us." And, with that, they heard his retreating step as though he were issuing from an outer chamber of the structure in which they were confined.

"My lord," said O'Hogan, in a low voice, as he unbound Sarsfield's arms, "I am sorry that this mishap has befallen us, not for my own sake, but for yours. However, yonder ruffian knows you not. If he did, he would have seemed more glad of his prize. Trust to me to find some plan of escape before it comes to the worst."

"We will trust to our arms, and these small bowlders of rock beneath our feet, if it come to that," returned Sarsfield, smiling grimly in the darkness. "By my faith! an they come to take us forth, we can at least dash out some of their brains, and then make a rush for our freedom."

During all this, Cus Russid, who had slipped through his noose, like an eel, had been groping about in the interior of their place of durance. Far in, in what seemed to be an inner chamber of their prison, he had discovered a round hole cut downward through a huge sandstone flag that formed the side of the roof. Through this hole,

after a great deal of ingenious screwing, he had at length succeeded in protruding his black head. After looking out between the stems of the ferns that shaded the aperture, he carefully withdrew his head and returned to his companions. He had seen no pleasant sight.

"Captain," he said, as he crept up to where O'Hogan was still standing, "there is a chink in the roof inside there, just large enough for my head. I looked out through it, an' saw about twenty men undher an oak tree with Black Gideon in their midst, an' they settlin' ropes, like hangmen, to four o' the strongest branches overhead. Oh, wirra, wirra! what'll become of us?"

"Ha!" exclaimed O'Hogan, "did you see where their horses were, Cus?"

"Yes, sir," answered Cus: "they were all grazin' in a little hollow at the foot of a small *lios* in the wood."

"Now," rejoined O'Hogan, as if communing with himself, "I begin to recollect where we are. But we can soon settle that question," he continued, as with a sudden start he put his hand in his pocket, drew out a tinder-box, and struck a light. The blaze of the burning match fell dimly upon the opposite wall, and there showed the half-obliterated figure of a knight carved in the rough stone.

"By the blood of my body, my lord general!" exclaimed the brave Rapparee, the moment his eye fell upon the weird-looking and rude effigy, "but

we are more fortunate than I thought. We are in the Gray Knight's Chamber, a place I know well. Black Gideon, when he thrust us in, did not know how many doors open from it, and what a treasure is hid there. Follow me, all; for there is not a moment to be lost." With that, he lit another match, and led the way into the inner chamber. Here he pulled away a tall, thin flag that seemed to fit into the side-wall, and discovered the entrance to another chamber. On entering the latter, they found its dry floor strewn with weapons of all kinds from the old matchlocks and battleaxes of Queen Elizabeth's time to the musketoons, half-pikes, and swords used in the days of the second Charles.

"Now, general," said O'Hogan, "choose your weapon. As for me, I will have this sword," and he took up a huge, rusty one that rested against the wall. "You, too, Tibbot. You, Cus, take a short pike, and that dagger lying at your feet. You will mayhap want the latter in the service you are about to perform. Attend to me, boy. From this place there are two underground passages, — one from this very chamber, that leads to the *lios*, under which you saw the horses grazing, — see! here it is," and he removed a sheaf of pikes from the wall, showing behind a low and narrow passage, — "the other is from the chamber outside."

"I know it, captain," interrupted Cus. "It lades to the other *lios*, in the very thick o' the wood. I went through it twenty times. But I didn't know this one."

"Very well," rejoined O'Hogan. "You are to escape through that passage when Gideon and his men come in for us. You will go through it like a weazel, while we get out through this passage, seize three horses outside, and then ride for our lives. Be sure to make a good noise, to draw Gideon and his ruffians after you; and, if one of them should overtake you at the far-off turn of the passage, you know the use of half-a-dozen inches of cold steel. Once you reach Lios na Cummer, it will be easy for you to escape through the woods. We are going to Glenurra Castle, where you can rejoin us."

"Never fear me, captain," exclaimed Cus Russid. "If one o' them overtakes me afore I reach the *lios* I'll plant this athune his ribs. But, churp an dhoul! I hear them coming. Give me a couple o' matches, captain. There, that'll do," and he crept out into the second chamber, and replaced the stone against the aperture, thus shutting out his companions from the observation of Gideon and his myrmidons. He now pulled away the slab that covered the main outlet, and let it fall with a loud crash on the stony floor. At the same moment, Gideon and most of his men came to the outer entrance, all with brands of lighted bog-deal in their left hands, — their pistols in the right. Every thing fell out just as O'Hogan had planned. He and Tibbot and Sarsfield gained the open air at length, suddenly fell upon and slew the three men left outside to guard the horses, and were in a moment galloping away with the speed of the

wind towards Glenurra Castle. Cus Russid treaded the passage with the agility of a fox, waited at the turn mentioned by O'Hogan, and, planting his dagger, as he had promised, between the ribs of the first of his pursuers that came up, gained the wood outside, and soon put several good miles between himself and Black Gideon.

O'Hogan intended to meet at Glenurra Castle young Hugh O'Ryan, another and one of the bravest of his lieutenants. But when at sunset they walked into the hall of that ancient stronghold, they were welcomed to a sad scene. On a huge oaken table, in the midst of the great hall, lay the dead body of poor Hugh, surrounded by his weeping friends. As the three entered, the *caoine*, or death-song, was about to commence; so they sat down, according to custom, upon seats provided for them by one of the domestics, and, without a word, listened to the wild and heart-piercing song. A beautiful young girl, with her long black hair streaming in wild disorder over her shoulders, stood at the head, and began the lament; in the distressfully plaintive burthen of which she was joined by all the females in the room. The song went on somewhat like the following, slowly and mournfully:—

“The woods of Drumlory
Are greenest and fairest,
And flowers in gay glory
Bloom there of the rarest:

They'll deck without number
A red grave and narrow,
Where he'll sleep his last slumber,
Young Hugh of Glenurra !

The canavaun's blooming
Like snow on the marish,
The autumn is coming,
The summer flowers perish ;
And, though love smiles all gladness,
He's left me in sorrow,
To mourn in my madness,
Young Hugh of Glenurra !

Sweet love filled forever
His kind words and glances ;
Light foot there was never
Like his in the danees,
By forest or fountain,
In goal on the curragh,
Or chase on the mountain,
Young Hugh of Glenurra !

When eannons did rattle,
And trumpets brayed loudly,
In the grim van of battle
His long plume waved proudly :
As the bolts from the bowmen,
Or share through the furrow,
He tore through the foemen,
Young Hugh of Glenurra !

Alas ! when we parted
That morn in the hollow,
Why staid I faint-hearted ?
Why ne'er did I follow,

To fight by his side there,
The red battle thorough,
And die when he died there?
Young Hugh of Glenurra!

Ah, woe is me! woe is me!
Love cannot wake him:
Woe is me! woe is me!
Grief cannot make him
Quit, to embrace me,
This red couch of sorrow,
Where soon they shall place me
By Hugh of Glenurra."

"It is Marion Creagh, the betrothed wife of poor Hugh," whispered O'Hogan, as he directed Sarsfield's attention to the young girl who had sung the lament. "But here comes Hugh's father, Owen O'Ryan, to welcome us. God help him! he has a sad welcome on his war-worn face. We shall now learn all about the death of my poor lieutenant."

CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH EDMOND OF THE HILL APPEARS UPON THE SCENE,
AND CUS RUSSID AGAIN BRINGS NEWS OF ELLIE CONNELL;
SHOWING ALSO HOW SARSFIELD AND THE RAPPAREE CAP-
TAINS MARCH TO MEET THEIR FOES AT THE BRIDGE OF
TERN,

OWEN O'RYAN, the father of the young Rapparee officer who lay stark upon the table, was a man of about fourscore years of age, somewhat low of

stature, with a white beard descending upon a chest of unusual prominence, and with a pair of shoulders so broad that they almost seemed to fill up the doorway through which he now issued to welcome O'Hogan and his companions. Age seemed to have little other effect upon the old gentleman than that of thinning his features, and giving a clearer outline to the long aquiline nose that projected between his sharp gray eyes; for his figure was still as brawny and erect as when, nearly fifty years before, he had donned morion and back-and-breast as a captain of horse under the Kilkenny Confederation. He had been too much accustomed all his life long to scenes of blood and sorrow to be much affected, at least externally, even by the death of his last and youngest son; yet as he grasped O'Hogan's hand with a silent greeting, and glanced at the woful figure upon the table, there was a tear in his eloquent eye, and a twitch upon his wrinkled face, that told the working of the brave but troubled soul within.

"I would," he said, still keeping O'Hogan's hand in his, "that I could give you other greeting than this. But war is always the same. It has long been sapping the foundations of my house, and now it has taken my last son."

"He died the death of a brave man, however, like his brothers before him," said O'Hogan, his heart swelling and his eyes also glistening at sight of the old soldier's trouble.

"Yes," rejoined the latter, "he died at least in har-

ness. This morning at rise of sun he rode forth at the head of the men of Coonagh, to lie in wait for a troop of cavalry who began yesterday pillaging the country, and who then carried their booty last night to the House of Lisbloom."

"It must be the same party that our messenger told us of," said O'Hogan. "I knew they would not go to garrison Black Gideon's house without spilling some blood upon the way, and having a little pillage to keep their hands in practice. But we will settle accounts with them ere long."

"It was for that purpose my son went forth," continued the old man, "and, had he only lived to meet them, they would scarcely have returned to Lisbloom. But, alas! as he crossed the Bridge of Tern, and just caught sight of the English cavalry coming out into the plain to commence their day of blood, a single carbine-shot from the wood hard by struck him through the heart, and there he lies." And he pointed sternly to the table. "Yes, there he lies; and there be who say that it was the man you mentioned but just now who fired the shot,—Black Gideon Grimes."

"A curse upon the hand that fired it: it was a base and coward shot," said Tibbot.

"Young man," returned the brawny patriarch of Glenurra, "curse not, for words are idle and worthless in times like this. One good sabre-cut on the crown, or slash across the breast or face, is worth ten thousand words in redressing a wrong."

"In the method you favor," said O'Hogan, "I can safely say Tibbot is not slack."

"I know it," answered the old man, "and he will soon have opportunity enough for practising it; for I've sent for my nephew, Eman na Cnuc,* whom I expect here momentarily with his men. Ha! Marion," he continued, his gray eyes flashing fiercely, as the young girl again commenced clasping her hands and moaning piteously at the head of the table, "your loss will be well avenged ere many days are over."

"We have all an account to settle with the murderous dog whose shot laid poor Hugh low," said O'Hogan; and he related the news brought by Cus Russid, and the adventure that befell them in the chamber of the Gray Knight. He then introduced Sarsfield.

The old soldier of Glenurra cast an admiring glance on the great cavalry general with whose name all Ireland was now ringing, took his hand with a clasp like that of a vice, and gave him a welcome, sad enough indeed, but still cordial, to his castle. While engaged in the conversation that followed, a slight rustle was heard in the room; and, on turning round, they beheld standing silently at the foot of the table, and gazing fixedly at the corpse, a figure that the old chief and the two Rapparee leaders knew well, but which at once struck Sarsfield as one of the most remarkable he had ever seen.

There, erect as a spear-shaft, stood a young man,

* Edmond of the Hill.

slightly above the middle height, with eyes black and piercing like those of an eagle, and a sun-embrowned face eminently beautiful in its contour and proportions. A bright morion, in the crown-spike of which was stuck a spray of heather with its purple flowers all in bloom, defended his proud head; and from beneath it flowed down a mass of raven-black and shining hair upon a glittering steel corselet, under which in its turn the skirts of a light green coat fell in graceful folds over the manly leg of its wearer. Over the corselet was flung a broad green leathern belt, from which depended a heavy cavalry sabre and a long skean or dagger, with the hilt of which latter the hand of its owner was playing nervously as he still stood gazing sorrowfully upon the pale face of the corpse. Such was Eman na Cnue, or Edmond of the Hill, one of the noblest gentlemen and bravest of Rapparee captains that ever drew sword and shook bridle free in the cause of the worthless and weak-minded King James the Second.

At Eman's appearance in the hall, the *caoine*, or death-song, recommenced wilder, more vehemently, and more distressingly sorrowful than before, the women bending over the table with clasped hands and streaming eyes; one of them, in the intervals between each portion of the heart-breaking cry, relating, in a voluble and mournful recitative in her native tongue, the virtues and various gallant actions of the dead youth, dwelling particularly on those done in companionship with his dauntless

cousin, Edmond of the Hill. A number of men now filled the hall, each of whom wore a sharp iron spur upon his heel; and, whether he carried a light green cap or iron pott* upon his head, having a sprig of blossomed mountain heather waving jauntily in its crown, — a badge by which they were known through the wide country round as followers of their bold captain, Eman; just as the men who acted under the command of Galloping O'Hogan were recognized by their plumes of green waving fern. Several of these immediately joined in the cry; and so contagious did their grief become that Sarsfield was at last glad to retire beyond the immediate sphere of its influence into an inner room of the castle, where, with the aged, but still warlike Owen, with Edmond of the Hill, and the others, he sat consulting on the best and speediest method of settling accounts with Gideon Grimes and the blood-thirsty troopers who now garrisoned the redoubtable stronghold of Lisbloom.

People from all parts of the surrounding country were still crowding into and around the Castle of Glenurra, although it was nearly midnight, when Cus Russid, completely worn out as if from a hard day's work, glided into the room in which Sarsfield and the Rapparee leaders were holding their council of war, and stood before Tibbot Burke.

"Well," said the latter, "I hope you have no worse news to tell us."

* Pott, — the helmet worn by the common cavalry men of the time.

"Indeed, then, sir, be my sowl! I have, — the Lord pardon me for swearin' before your lordship!" answered Cus, addressing the latter portion of his sentence to Sarsfield.

"What is it, my man?" asked the latter. "Me-thinks it cannot prove much worse than every thing happening around us."

"This is it, my lord," answered Cus; "an' you, Captin O'Hogan, an' you, Edmond o' the Hill, an' all o' ye consarned, ought to mind it well. When I stuck my skean into the ribs o' the first man that overtook me undher the ground by *Lios na Cummer*, an' then got out into the free air o' the wood, an' put three good glens bethune my carkiss an' the pisthol o' Gideon Grimes, says I to myself, 'Be the hole o' my coat, an' be the blessed stone of Imly! Cus Russid, but you're no man, but a mane sprissaun, if you don't whip off to Lisbloom to see how matthers are carryin' on there. I did so, hop at the venthure! my lord, an' found that, instead o' one throop o' dhragoons an' a cannon, that there were two throops there, and two companies of infanthry, together with Black Gideon's men, to defend the house an' pass. I heerd all this from one o' the workmen, — a man I know, that came into the wood when I whistled for him, — be the same token, the signil bethune him an' me was the whistle of a hawk questin.' The other throop an' the companies of infanthry were sent there to furrige the counthry, — bad luck to them!"

"I fear me," said Sarsfield, with a grave face, turning to the others, "that it will be now impossible for you to take this strong house, and to come at your man. Oh! if I had but one troop of my Lucan horse to aid us, we would make short work of them."

"Not altogether impossible, my lord," answered Edmond of the Hill. "Outside in the wood I have two hundred men, half of them foot, and well armed with pike and gun; half of them light horsemen, who will follow me to the death. My uncle of Glenurra can bring, at least, fifty more horse and foot at his back; and O'Hogan can have his men drawn down from the mountains by to-morrow. To-morrow, then, as sure as there are stout hearts in our bosoms, we will wreak vengeance sure and swift upon Black Gideon and his accursed house."

"Be it so," said O'Hogan with a grim smile. "You, Tibbot, take horse and away to the mountains. Have our lads of the fern sprigs here by to-morrow; and, by the blood of my body! if we do not cut up the Sassenach rascals, root and branch, or burn the House of Lisbloom over their heads, my name is not Galloping O'Hogan. Go on, Cus."

"You may be sure," continued Cus Russid, with a knowing wink, and a significant wave of his hand towards the western point of the compass, "after the way I thrated the Sassenach captin over there, an' served the dhragoon with my pike, when I made bould to take his horse, you may be sure an'

sartin that I didn't like to show my nose in Lisbloom by daylight. I waited in the wood till nightfall, an' then crep in over ditch an' bethune the pallysadoes, just for all the worldt like a weasel, for the devil resave the morsel o' me the senthries could aither see or hear, although at one time I could have tickled one o' their shins with my skean. I crep an' crep till at last I landed myself safe an' sound among the weeds right undhernathe the window o' the room where Ellie Connell was confined. I wasn't long there till I heerd high words inside, an' Black Gideon spakin'.

“‘He is dead,’ said he.

“‘Who?’ said Ellie, houldin’ her breath, the poor crathur, as if she was on the point o’ dyin’.

“‘Tibbot Burke is dead,’ answered my bowld Gideon.

“‘Tibbot Burke dead!’ said Ellie with a great cry; an’ then I heerd nothin’ but her moans for a long fwhile.

“‘Yes:’ says my cute fox again, ‘an’ now you are free to have a betther man.’

“‘The end of it was,’ concluded Cus, with a comprehensive glance to his auditors, “that, as far forth as I could judge, Black Gideon shook his dagger in the face o’ poor Ellie Connell, an’ gave her two days to consider, an’ if at the end o’ that time she didn’t consint to let ould Habakuk Thrumpet-the-Word, the ould Tackum pracher he keeps in Lisbloom, — bad luck to the same Habakuk, body an’

bones an' sowl, this blessed night!—to marry them both on the spot, if you please, he'd hack her poor heart into pieces not half the size of a thrish's ancle."

"This Gideon must be as active in wickedness as the evil demon himself," said Sarsfield.

"He is," said O'Hogan; "but his course is now run."

"Yés," said the old chief of Glenurra: "we will catch him on the hip to-morrow. Even as I now stand on the brink of the grave, aged and worn, I, even I, will don my harness to have one good blow at the murdering dog and the rieving villains who garrison his stronghold. The last of my sons lies stark and stiff beneath his ruffian bullet; but poor Hugh, at least, shall be well avenged."

Some short time after the arrival of Cus Russid, a number of women had crowded in from the neighboring hamlets; and, as the chiefs inside listened to the important narration of the brown messenger, the *caoine*, far more thrilling and loud than ever, broke upon their ears at intervals from the great hall outside. Amongst these new-comers, who, as each batch arrived, raised the death-song in their turn over the body of the aged chieftain's son, was one figure, far taller than any of those with whom she entered, who now sat herself down, enveloped in a huge gray mantle, the hood thrown over and carefully concealing her face, in a dark corner of the hall, near the door. As Tibbot Burke went out to get his horse, in order to execute the command of

his captain, this mysterious figure stood up without a word, and glided close upon his track into the great yard or bawn, and thence out by the woodside, where Tibbot had left his horse tied to a tree. It glided now behind and under the black shadows of the branches. Tibbot was preparing to mount, when he was arrested by the figure, drawing the hood more closely over its features, and then, for the first time, speaking.

"Ha!" it said in a coarse, yet well-feigned voice, like that of a woman: "you are mounting, Tibbot Burke, for the battle, just as Hugh of Glenurra mounted his steed this morning. Ere to-morrow morning is over, where shall you be?"

"In my saddle, I suppose," answered Tibbot, quietly, "with my sword in my hand, shearing through the head-pieces of the rascals who are to come out from Lisbloom to-morrow, to rob, pillage, and slay my poor countrymen!"

"No," returned the other, "but under the gory horse-hoofs of those rascals, as you call profanely the soldiers of the brave and victorious King William. No: stark and bloody you shall lie, as he inside lies beneath the godly bullet of a true man."

"It is false," retorted Tibbot: "I tell you I shall slay to-morrow the miscreant and coward murderer whose assassin bullet laid my comrade low. Gideon Grimes," continued he, apostrophizing one whom he thought at the moment far away, "when we meet on the morrow, take your last look at the sun; for,

as sure as that sun shines, I shall slay you or die." And he ground his teeth at the thought. "Were you other than what you seem,—a woman," he rejoined, turning to the figure, "I would send your head dancing over the sward with a slash of my sabre, for speaking thus."

"I am what I am," returned the figure, oracularly, and with a change of voice that made Tibbot start; "and that you will find by Tern's Bridge tomorrow; for it is there, I have heard, you mean to attack us."

"Ha, ha, black ruffian! and so we are met at last," exclaimed Tibbot, springing, skean in hand, upon Gideon; for in that disguise the ubiquitous undertaker had come as a spy into Glenurra. In an instant the gray mantle was in the grasp of the young Rapparee lieutenant; but, with as quick an action, the undertaker slipped from its folds, raised his dagger in air, and struck his antagonist a blow on the chest that sent him staggering a few paces backward with the empty garment in his hand. It was well for Tibbot that he wore a good steel jack that night, else the long blade of the undertaker had dealt him a fatal blow. Recovering himself in a moment, however, he again sprang vengefully forward, but found only empty darkness. Gideon was gone; but his hissing voice sounded once more from between the ghostly trunks of the dark trees in the wood:—

"Ha, ha!" he said: "you will come to your doom,

base dogs, to-morrow, at the Bridge of Tern, when we go forth to bring in forage for the army of the brave Ginkell."

Tibbot, knowing that pursuit was useless in the darkness, sprang upon his horse, and dashed away down a valley that led towards the mountains, amid the summits of which were encamped the horsemen belonging to Galloping O'Hogan.

At length the morning dawned, and the wail of the *caoiners* was hushed in the sorrowful castle of Glenurra. All were asleep in and around the castle, save those who stood sentinel outside, and those who watched over the dead in the hall. Suddenly, from the wood outside, a trumpet sent its shrill *reveillé* echoing through the silent chambers. The slumberers awoke, looked to their arms, and in an instant there was a loud hubbub and hurrying to and fro in the castle. The men hastened out to rejoin their leaders; while the women, gathering round the corpse, clapped their hands together, and with wild shrieks raised the death-song once more, calling upon their departing relatives to wreak vengeance, sure and swift, upon the murderer of their aged chieftain's son.

Sarsfield and O'Hogan also awoke; and, choosing their arms from the plentiful collection that hung around the walls, went out, mounted their horses, and sought the wood from which the trumpet-note proceeded; and there, in a broad green glade, they found the fiery Edmond of the Hill and his veteran

uncle, marshalling their men for battle. Messengers had been sent out during the night to the friends of Owen; so that the little Rapparee army was now augmented considerably, amounting to about one hundred and fifty horse, and as many foot. The latter were armed, half with long pikes, half with muskets, each having a long skean dangling at his belt; and the bright eyes of Sarsfield, scanning the ranks of the former, flashed approvingly, as he noted their brown, hardy faces and well-knit frames, while they sat their small, but burly horses, sword in hand, and in two long lines, awaiting the command of their leader.

"My lord," said Edmond of the Hill, as Sarsfield came up, "you have the best right to command here. Will you lead us for once? and I trust we shall show you ere leaving that the poor Rapparees can strike as hard as the men of the regular army."

"You will excuse me, young sir," returned Sarsfield courteously, "but methinks the command more befits you at the present, seeing that you are accustomed to the evolutions of these brave lads. Therefore I will serve as a volunteer under your orders to-day, and hope at the same time to do my devoir, like a man, with the rest."

"Well, my lord, I suppose it must be so," said Edmond of the Hill; "but, as I must thus command the whole, O'Hogan here will lead the horse, seeing that his own have not come in yet. When they do, Tibbot knows how to fall on with them like a man."

To this O'Hogan assented. "My uncle here will keep by your side, my lord," continued the young Rapparee leader; "and, if he can get one good sword-slash at the crown of Gideon Grimes, why, in God's name! let him have that comfort before he dies. We must 'now away." His words of command rang along the line, and in a few moments the whole body was marching at a steady pace through the valley that led towards the foot of the far-off range of mountains.

After putting about a dozen miles between themselves and Glenurra, they arrived upon the verge of a bosky moorland, through which the Mulkern wound northward in many a shining sinuosity, overshadowed here and there by clumps of venerable ash-trees, that gave a peculiarly sylvan and picturesque aspect to its low, swampy shores. Out upon the other verge of this broad moorland the high peak of Comailte, the brawny giant that rears its shaggy head to the heavens in the van of the solitary range of Sliav Bloom, sent forward its rugged spurs, bedecked with many a clump of green holly or mountain ash, or shining all over with the blooms of the purple heather; and between these spurs, or hillocks, many a brawling rivulet shot down with its ever-murmuring song, and with its tiny waves glistening like silver in the golden sun of that pleasant autumn morning. From the spot on which they now halted, a broad bridle-path led through the centre of the moorland, and over a bend of the Mulkern by a

two-arched bridge, so narrow that three horsemen could scarcely ride abreast over its rugged causeway. This latter was the Bridge of Tern, beside which poor Hugh of Glenurra had fallen on the previous day beneath the carbine of Black Gideon Grimes.

"Are the foragers from Lisbloom to cross this bridge?" asked Sarsfield, as his eye roved over and around the rude and ancient structure with a scrutinizing and keen glance.

"It is the only pass they have to the plain southward," answered Edmond of the Hill; "and we mean to wait for their coming in the wood at this side of it."

"I must certainly commend your judgment in the choice of a position," returned Sarsfield: "for the little plain between the wood and the bridge is a good spot for our horsemen to charge them when they are half over; and see, by my good faith as a soldier! at the very bridge the river takes a bend towards us, where our infantry can rake their flanks as they cross."

Again the little army moved on, and took up its position in the following manner: The horsemen, after forming in line in the wood in front of the river, dismounted, and concealed themselves under the trees, ready to mount again and charge at the word of their commander; while those of the infantry that carried muskets crouched down under shelter of the copses that clad the banks on each of

the hither sides. The pikemen stood in a body under cover of the wood, on the flank of the horsemen; and thus they all awaited, with stern faces and vengeful hearts, the coming of their foe.

They had not long to wait. Before half an hour was over, they beheld the glint of weapons and armor in a winding valley that led down from the Pass of Lisbloom; and at length the main part of the garrison of that important stronghold emerged upon the far verge of the moorland, and took its way over the bridle-path that led towards the Bridge of Tern.

CHAPTER IV.

CONTAINING, ALONG WITH THE END OF THE STORY, THE BATTLE AT THE BRIDGE OF TERN; THE DEATH OF GIDEON GRIMES, AND RECOVERY OF ELLIE CONNELL; WITH THE TAKING OF THE HOUSE OF LISBLOOM BY THE RAPPAREES.

“WERE it not for my uncle, who insists upon avenging himself upon the very spot where Hugh was murdered, I would let them pass the bridge,” whispered Edmond of the Hill to Sarsfield, as he saw the bright accoutrements of the enemy flashing in the sun: “I would let them pass, and then attack the House of Lisbloom in their absence.”

“It would be the wisest course,” answered Sars-

field; "but, now that we will soon have them face to face, we must do as best we may. And a tough morning's work we have before us," he continued, peering warily out between the trees; "for, by Our Lady! they outnumber us considerably. See! our force only equals that of theirs in uniform. But look at that dark body of men in the centre, with the tall, lank horseman at its head. Who may that be?"

"It is Gideon Grimes, my lord," answered Owen of Glenurra, in a deep voice, like the growl of a crouching lion.

"It is Black Gideon himself," said Edmond of the Hill. "O'Hogan," continued he in a fierce whisper, "pass the word to have the men lie close till they get the signal to mount and charge. I will blow the charge on my whistle when the time comes." And he held out a beautifully-chased silver whistle, that hung by a small chain from a ring in his belt.

O'Hogan crept in front of the line, executed the order of the young commander, and then returned.

"Ha!" exclaimed he, on looking forward again, "here comes their vanguard clattering over the bridge at last. I hope our men under the copses yonder will not be tempted to fire at them as they pass."

"My two foster-brothers, Theige Keal and Phadrig Garv, will see to that," answered Eman na Cnuc. "They command, one above and the other below the bridge, with strict orders not to pull a trigger till they hear my whistle."

The main body of the enemy was at last somewhat more than half over the bridge, the men bandying joke and jibe at the timidity of the poor Rapparees, whom they expected to find and cut to pieces on the spot; yet whose apparent absence not a little relieved their minds, however. The half-a-dozen men of the vanguard seemed in an unusually hilarious humor; for, as they leisurely approached the wood, they chaunted at the top of their bent the chorus of a delectable and popular Williamite ballad of the day, the verses of which were intoned in a rattling, jolly, and stentorian voice by the fat Yorkshire corporal who led them:—

“Och, be my sowl! but we’ve got de Talbote,
Lillabulero bullena la!
And our skeans we’ll make good at de Englishman’s throat,
Lillabulero bullena la!”

“Yerra, then, be my sowl! if you were the father o’ lies himself, but that’s thrue for you anyhow, you red-nosed robber!” muttered Cus Russid to himself from a thicket about sixty yards in front of the corporal. “Hi, hi! I could split my sides wid laughin’ at the way we’ll carry out yeer song, an’ slit yeer windpipes, afore an hour is over.”

“Ah!” sighed Sarsfield, as he too listened, “had both the subjects of that ballad, King James and Talbot, never set foot in Ireland, we would have managed our campaigns to some purpose.”

“It is but too true, my lord,” whispered O’Hogan

in return. "Had you been allowed by the king to charge with your Lucan horse at the Boyne, that disastrous day might have ended differently."

"Yes; and all subsequent affairs as a consequence," said Sarsfield.

Still the song went on, the chorus of each verse being now taken up by many of the men filing over the bridge:—

"Dere was an ould propheety found in a bog,
Lillabulero bullena la !
Dat Ireland should be ruled by an ass and a dog ;
Lillabulero bullena la !
And now dis ould propheety is come to pass,
Lillabulero bullena la !
For Talbote's de dog and James is de " —

"Ass," he would have said; but at that moment the shrill note from the whistle of Edmond of the Hill rang over the moorland, and at the self-same instant also the half-pike of Cus Russid came whizzing from the thicket; and, as the unfortunate corporal was in the act of opening his capacious mouth to pronounce with thundering effect this last word of the verse, the weapon entered between his teeth, literally transpiercing his neck. With a horrible groan he fell from his frightened horse upon the stony bridle-way.

The first voice that broke the terrible pause that succeeded was that of Cus Russid, as he darted recklessly out from the thicket, and tore the sword from the hand of the dying corporal.

“Hi, hi, hi!” he laughed, whirling the flashing weapon around his head — “ha, ha! Dhar Vurrhia! but you’re a man in airnest, Cus, to dhraw the first blood on a day like this.”

The next was that of Phadrig Garv, or Patrick the Rough, the foster-brother of Edmond of the Hill. Phadrig was a man of nearly seven good feet in height, and even disproportionably stout and brawny into the bargain. His tremendous voice rang over the moorland like that of a mountain bull, as he ordered his men to fire on the exposed flank of the enemy.

The third was that of Edmond of the Hill himself, as he gave the word for the horsemen to mount and charge, and the pikemen to rush out from their ambush and fall on. Then came the shouts of the English captains, as they ordered their men to deploy into line, and stand the shock of the vengeful Rapparees.

For a short time the enemy seemed to waver as they beheld the well-arranged lines of Irish horse and pikemen emerge from the wood, and heard their terrible battle-cry ringing over the sombre moor. But it was only for a moment; for, just as they commenced to turn their beards over their shoulders, as the Spanish saying goes, and look behind, Black Gideon Grimes and his compeers, with their men, came steadily forward upon their right in a well-formed line, the appearance of which had the effect of re-assuring the English troopers. But a con-

tinuous line all along their front, they got no time to form; for in an instant, with a ringing cheer that rose high over the rattle of musketry and the clash of swords, the Rapparees were upon them, with a shock like a peal of crashing thunder. Then commenced one of those struggles, sharp, deadly, and decisive, that always ensues when the antagonists on both sides are men of strength and mettle.

The English, both horse and foot, were good and steady soldiers; and their auxiliaries, the undertakers, were not a whit behind them in valor. These men, descended from the veteran soldiers of Cromwell's armies, still nourished in their bosoms the fatalism of their Roundhead fathers; and believing that the hour of their death was predetermined from that of their birth, and consequently that none could die then and there unless their inexorable fate willed it, inheriting also a mad contempt for their Irish opponents and a hatred of the latter amounting to frenzy, they now stood their ground, and met the gallant charge of the Rapparees with a coolness and spirit worthy of a better cause. But, notwithstanding all this, the enemy began gradually falling back, till their whole line, with both flanks drawn in, appeared, with the gaps made here and there in it, like a torn *tête du pont*, or half-moon, in front of the bridge. Round the outside of this grim semicircle, the Rapparees, both footmen and horsemen, were now raging like so many demons.

At length the whole line suddenly gave way, and,

horse and foot, mingled pell-mell, endeavored to make their escape over the bridge, the approach to which was soon strewn with their corpses; for the victorious Rapparees, with vengeful weapons and stout arms, pushed them close behind, cutting them mercilessly down as they fled.

"Blood for blood!" roared Phadrig Garv, as he rushed sword in hand amidst the confused throng.

"Remember Hugh of Glenurra!" shouted Edmond of the Hill, as he clove a dragoon's skull, through morion and all, to the very chin.

"Give them a touch of Limerick breach, my brave lads," exclaimed Sarsfield, rattling up the causeway and overturning every thing in his way.

"Yes, and a taste of Ballineety," laughed O'Hogan, as he slashed the bridle-hand from the arm of one of Black Gideon's comrades.

"Vengeance, vengeance for my son!" yelled old Owen of Glenurra, as he, too, went cutting right and left into the fierce *mêlée*. "Vengeance for my son! Glenurra! Glenurra, for ever! and down with the Pagan Roundhead dogs!" and the cry was caught up and echoed long and loud by his wild Rapparee followers, as they now swept their enemies, like chaff, over the gory archway of the bridge.

The English at length succeeded in getting over the bridge; and the Irish were crowding the slippery causeway in order to pursue them at the opposite side, when an unexpected messenger stopped them in their mid career. This was nothing less than a

heavy iron round shot from the large brass cannon so much admired by Cus Russid a couple of days before. The enemy had concealed it as they marched across the moorland, expecting to meet the Rapparees openly at the bridge; and now, after escaping over the archway, they suddenly divided right and left, thus leaving a space through which the round shot came ricochetting along the bridle-path, and ploughing through the thick throng of the advancing Irish. The delay occasioned by this unexpected visitor gave time to the enemy to form their broken ranks once more at the other side of the bridge.

Both sides were now upon their guard; and the battle dwindled down to an occasional shot from the cannon, and a rattle of musketry now and then from the skirmishers, who crept out on either shore of the Mulkern. It would probably have continued at this low ebb until night separated the belligerents, were it not for a wild freak of Phadrig Garv, whose warlike spirit would not allow him to remain in inactivity so long, especially with his blood up, and the enemy almost within reach of his long arm. Mounted on a trooper's horse he had taken in the beginning of the fray, he now rode over the bridge to the opposite side; and there, reining in his steed, politely invited the best man amongst the English troopers to come forth and meet him in single combat:—

“For,” said he in his imperfect English, and in a

voice that could he heard distinctly at the other side of the moor, "fwhile our blood is hot, it is a morthial pity an' a burnin' shame to let it cool ; an' hur own self will fight the best *Suidhera Dheary* * amongst ye for a silver skilling or a *dhuch* of *Isgevaha*." †

The stake he proposed for his tremendous game of hazard was so low and reasonable that the simple-minded Phadrig expected to have his proposition accepted immediately and on the spot. A long consultation followed, however, amongst the English, during which he several times reiterated his cartel. At last a trooper, somewhat like Phadrig in stature, rode forth from the ranks of the enemy, and accepted his challenge. To it they went, stoutly and warily, encouraged by shouts from each side;—each party expecting its man to come off conqueror. The result of it was, however, that the gigantic Phadrig at length wheeled his horse round and made for the bridge, with his equally gigantic antagonist a prisoner stretched before him, beyond the bow of the saddle, like a sack of corn taken to market by a Kerryman.

Seeing this, half-a-dozen English troopers spurred forward to rescue their comrade, while, at the same time, about the same number of Rapparee horsemen rode over the bridge to support Phadrig Garv. Once more it came to sword and pistol between them ; and, both sides being joined by the main part

* Red soldier.

† A shilling, or a drink of whiskey.

of their respective comrades and officers, a general and far more bloody fight than ever commenced at the further side of the bridge. The English, who considerably outnumbered the Rapparees, succeeded in driving the latter partly back over the archway; and here, in one of those strange alternations which sometimes occur in the common course of life, but more frequently amid the shifting scenes and wild incidents of battle, Sarsfield, with Edmond of the Hill and his uncle respectively on his right hand, sat his horse at the keystone of the causeway confronting one of the English captains; while, opposite his companions, with tightened reins and swords ready on the guard, rode another Williamite officer and Gideon Grimes, the eyes of the latter glaring with a look of immortal hate into the equally fierce orbs of the warlike patriarch of Glenurra.

"I have seen your face before," said the English officer, eyeing Sarsfield keenly.

"Probably," answered the latter; "and, after this renewal of our acquaintance, I hope to make your memory of me more perfect. Guard yourself, sir."

The answer was a slash from the Englishman's sabre, which would have taken Sarsfield across the forehead, had he not parried it dexterously.

"By Our Lady!" exclaimed Sarsfield, pushing forward in the press so as to crush the Englishman's horse tightly between his own charger and the worn parapet of the bridge, "but you give a warm wel-

come to an old acquaintance. However, here is to return it."

With that, after parrying another cut from his antagonist, he suddenly seized the latter by the bridle-hand, raised it, and plunged his sword deep under the armpit; then, as he was in the act of withdrawing his weapon, the tottering parapet of the ancient bridge gave way, and the dying captain and his horse were precipitated along with the falling mass of masonry, with a loud splash, into the sullen and blood-stained waters of the stream below. Sarsfield's horse stumbled over one of the displaced fragments, and would probably have followed that of the ill-fated Englishman, had not the good rider who bestrode him tightened his rein, and driven the snorting animal in a flying leap over the remaining portion of the parapet in front, and down upon the boggy shore at the other side of the stream, where we will leave him slashing and parrying right and left in the thick and raging throng of combatants, amidst which he alighted.

Meanwhile, Edmond of the Hill and the other English officer were not idle. Both were accomplished and wary swordsmen; and the fight between them would have lasted for a considerable time, had not a stray bullet struck the horse of the former in the chest. The wounded animal, probably receiving the bullet through its heart, stumbled and fell heavily forward upon its knees; and the English officer, stooping over his saddle-bow, was about to

cleave the head of Edmond of the Hill, when O'Hogan, riding by at the moment, struck up his sword, and then literally sheared his head in two with one slash of the four-foot blade he had taken that morning from Glenurra. In an instant, Edmond of the Hill was on his feet; and, springing into the empty saddle of his late antagonist, the two Rapparee captains rattled side by side into the press in front, and left Black Gideon and old Owen O'Ryan to see it out upon the causeway.

"Ha!" exclaimed Gideon, glaring at Owen. "Remember the bloody field of Knocknanoss, old Rapparee dog, where you and your leaders were stricken by the good swords of the Lord's chosen warriors; but where you, in your profane rage, lopped off the right hand of my father. You shall now die for that sore blow, as your Rapparee son died before you yesterday by this hand."

"Yes," answered the aged soldier, "I remember that field well, base murderer, and the cuckoldy old Roundhead drummer, your father. See! this is the very sword I carried through that field of blood, and that slashed off your father's hand, so that he could never more twirl drumstick and beat the charge to call the damned Cropears into battle."

Without another word, the two enemies closed; and Black Gideon would probably have fared somewhat worse than his father at the field of Knocknanoss, had not a round shot from the cannon struck the keystone of the bridge beneath the stamping

hoofs of their horses. The rickety and timeworn arch fell in at the shock ; and down into the horrible chaos beneath went the two mortal foes, horses and all, the combatants around standing still for a moment at the unwonted mishap, and then falling to once more, more vengefully than ever. There was a struggle and then a lull beneath ; but in a few moments Black Gideon bounded up the opposite bank, with his gory dagger in his hand, leaving the dead body of the brave old chieftain of Glenurra beneath the broken arch.

Although the principal English officers had fallen, others of approved skill and bravery had taken their places ; and the battle would have gone sorely with the Irish, who were now all at the opposite side of the bridge, their right flank raked by the terrible brass cannon, were it not that at this opportune time Tibbot Burke came riding over the moorland to their aid, at the head of about fifty of the fierce horsemen belonging to O'Hogan. On they came, their green plumes of fern dancing blithely in the wind, and with a wild and vengeful war-cry fell with sword and pistol upon the flank of the enemy. A terrible rout ensued. The English infantry were now scattered and cut down ; and the horse, wheeling round, swept like a scattered torrent across the moor, and away over the rough country that lay between them and the Pass of Lisbloom, the Rapparee cavalry behind them, sabring them in little groups here and there over slope and valley.

Phadrig Garv, who wished to join in the pursuit, now found himself mightily impeded by his gigantic prisoner, whom he had contrived to keep before him on the saddle through the fray. Catching the bridle of a riderless steed that stood near, he bent his large, wild eyes compassionately on his captive : —

“Hur own self,” said he, “was once a prisoner, an’ a good Sassenach released hur without eric or ransom. Sassenach,” and he gave the burly form of the Englishman a tremendous shake, “take this horse and flee. It’ll never be said by foe or sthranger that Phadrig Garv MocRonan failed to repay a good an’ ginerous deed done to hur own four bones in the day of thrubble.”

With that, he helped his foe tenderly to the ground ; saw him mount and fly for his life down by the shore ; and then striking his ponderous foot upon the steaming flank of his own charger, with a relieved heart and contented mind, he set off with a hilarious roar upon the track of those that fled towards Lisbloom.

One of the English gunners who had charge of the cannon was a brave fellow, and deserved a better fate. Seeing his comrades turn and flee, he limbered up the cannon in a moment, leaped upon the leading horse of the team that drew it, applied his whip, and was in the act of galloping away, when Cus Russid, who was gliding like a little demon everywhere over the field, presented a pistol, and shot him through the head. And thus Cus took

upon himself the credit of capturing the cannon he so much admired.

It was now about half an hour after the commencement of the pursuit, and Cus Russid and several of his companions were congregated around the gun, debating amongst themselves how to dispose of it, when a horseman came spurring back with an order from Edmond of the Hill to take it forward to Lisbloom, in order, if necessary, to batter down the defences of that stronghold. The triumphant Cus seated himself in a moment astride upon the breech of the gun, while some of his comrades mounted the horses; and away they went, attended by a jubilant crowd of pikemen. Now, Cus Russid, as the reader was made aware on his first introduction to that lively individual, had a particular *penchant* for singing songs on every possible occasion. Deeming the present a more than usually favorable one for indulging his musical propensity, after kicking up his heels in the excess of his delight, and calling for attention from his noisy comrades, he rattled forth, in an exceedingly lively and merry strain, —

“ THE PRODESTAN’ GUN.

“ There are treasures in Ireland as good as a throne,
Mighty pleasant an’ fine, could we make them our own;
An’ this Prodestan’ gun is a very fine thing
Fwhen it fights for ould Ireland and Shemus the king.
Yet to-day in the fray, be my sowl ! ’twas no joke,
Fwhen its Prodestan’ balls through the Rapparees broke;
But its race’ nathe the sway o’ the Dutchman is run,
For the Rapparees now own this Prodestan’ gun !

Chorus, boys! Fwhilst there's life there's hope, as the worm said in the stomach o' the gamecock.

Dum erlium di tay, dum erlium ri da,
Dum erlium, fol edrium, dum murlium ri da !

Whist! 'Tis time to stop yer windpipes, ye divvles. Here goes again, as the snowball said fwhen it hit Nancy Doornan in the nose.

'Tis nate at the patthern to dance a moneen ;
'Tis nate for to sit by a purty colleen ;
'Tis sweet for to bask by a hedge at your aise,
Fwhen the winds are all warm an' the sun in a blaze ;
There's a plisure in strikin' your innimy sore ;
There's a plisure in friendship an' whiskey galore ;
But the greatest o' plisures that's ondher the sun
Is to turn to a Papish this Prodestan' gun! —

Chorus! chorus! chorus! as the wran said afore he cracked his windpipe.

Dum erlium di tay, dum erlium ri da,
Dum erlium, fol edrium, dum murlium ri da ! ”

A burst of laughter hailed the termination of Cus Russid's song; at which that facetious personage kicked up his heels upon the cannon again, and seemed mightily pleased. When they at length arrived at a turn in the pass that brought them in view of the stronghold of Lisbloom, a sight presented itself before them that at once arrested their further progress. To explain it, it is necessary to go back half an hour or so.

When Black Gideon, who, with a dozen of his comrade undertakers and about thirty troopers, seemed to fly on the wings of the wind, reached his house and took shelter behind its fortifications, the Rapparees, headed by their leaders, were just entering the opening gorge of the pass. Gideon, seeing that the place was no longer tenable against the victorious force of the Rapparees, told all whom he met, and those that entered with him, to shift for themselves, and then rushed up a winding stair that led to the room in which Ellie Connell was confined. Bearing the fainting girl in his arms down the stairs and out into the bawn, he took a fresh horse, placed Ellie before him on the saddle, and, dashing out with the rest through the open gate, followed their course up the pass for a few moments, then turned aside, and swept obliquely across the breast of the hill, in order to gain the shortest track leading to Ginkell's camp before Limerick.

It was therefore that Cus Russid and his companions, as they halted, beheld the Rapparees pursuing the panic-stricken remnant of the garrison up towards the high outlet of the pass, and two horsemen riding, one in pursuit of the other, across the declivity of the hill. Cus recognized them in a moment.

"Be the sowl o' my father!" he exclaimed, "if it isn't Black Gideon himself, with Ellie Connell afore him on the saddle! An' see, there is Tibbot Burke hot fut upon his thrack! That's it, Tibbot!"

he shouted. "Don't spare the spur till you come at him with the good soord or pishtol. Hurry, hurry, hurry! for you have a fast rider and a desperate man to dale wid. Och! they'll be soon out of our sighth round the showldher o' the hill."

"No," said one of his comrades: "Tibbot is gettin' above him, an' will make him turn down into the glin o' Darren, fwere we can see it all out be-thune them. Dhar, Dhia! bud it'll be grand."

"Divvle a bit!" returned Cus: "he's too cute for that, boys. Look, look! he's goin' to ride down the side o' the Coum Dearg," alluding to a deep scaur or glen that ran down the side of the hill; "an' if he get's into it, the sheep-thrack will take him out over the summit, bad luck to him on his journey! Hurry, Tibbot, hurry! He's facin' it, an' see how the hoofs of his horse sthrike fire from the flinty stones! Hurry, hurry, Tibbot! or Black Gideon will give you the slip. Ha! honom-an-dhial, he's down!"

It was just as Cus Russid said. Gideon's horse struck one of its fore hoofs against a stone, stumbled, and then fell forward; Ellie Connell, luckily for herself, dropping quietly off upon the grass at the upper side; and Gideon, with a vain effort to recover himself, at length rolling over and over for a space down the hill. He was on his feet in an instant, however, and, drawing two pistols from his belt, stood prepared for Tibbot, who was now approaching at full speed. As the latter drew near, Gideon

suddenly turned with a diabolical and sinister leer upon his face, and discharged one of the pistols at Ellie as she still lay senseless upon the grassy slope. The ball ploughed up the earth within half a foot of her head, but did no harm. The other pistol he got no time to use; for, as he wheeled round to take aim at his coming foe, the sword of Tibbot descended upon his neck, half severing the head from the quivering trunk. Thus fell Black Gideon Grimes; and the last mortal sound that rang in his ears was an exultant yell from the gorge beneath of the poor peasants whom he had oppressed and plundered of the little left them by war and tyranny in their native glens.

Ellie Connell soon recovered from her swoon; and, by the time she was conducted to the bottom of the pass beneath, most of those engaged in the pursuit had returned. There Tibbot presented his future bride to Sarsfield, who, with a pleasant face, wished them many a happy day together,—a wish that was afterwards fulfilled. Sarsfield then bade them farewell; and, with a mighty cheer that woke the echoes of the surrounding hills ringing after him, rode up the pass, accompanied by O'Hogan and his horsemen, who were to conduct him across the Shannon to Limerick, leaving Edmond of the Hill and his victorious Rapparees to occupy the doughty stronghold of Lisbloom for the service of King James the Second.



THE WHITE KNIGHT'S PRESENT.

A LEGEND OF ARDFINNAN.

IN the latter years of the reign of Elizabeth, there lived in the fortress of Ballindunney a chieftain who was known by the euphonious title of the Mulloch Maol, or Maolmorrha MacSweeny. He was, about the time of the following events, over eighty years of age; but the martial fire that animated his youth, for he had been a renowned warrior in his day, burned in his breast as brightly as ever. With his fourteen stalwart sons, seven at each side, and his retainers ranged in due order below them along the great hall of the castle, he still presided every evening at the feast: and almost in the same order he rode forth to battle; for in those times there were battles to be had *galore*, — for love, for money, and even for nothing. At the same time there resided — one in his immediate neighborhood, and the other some distance to the west of his castle — two worthies of renown, who made it a settled thing never to be at peace with one another. The first

of these was Shane vic an Earla, or the son of the earl, chief of Ardfinnan Castle; and the other, the redoubtable Ridderah Fion, the White Knight, lord of the Clingibbon country. Shane vic an Earla was, it seems to me, a wily and prudent man; but, in the language of the legend, he is said to have been an arrant coward, always at variance with the White Knight, but at the same time frightened by his threats, and applying invariably to the indomitable Mulloch Maol for help against his attacks. One sunny day in the beginning of autumn, as Shane was sitting on the rock of Ardfinnan, looking over the bright scenery of the Suir, he saw a sturdy but tattered-looking beggar-man coming down a little valley to the west, and approaching the ford which ran across the river near the castle. When he had gained the opposite end of the ford, he stood for a few moments looking cautiously around him; then, taking his wallet in his hand, he cast it into the river, and, after pulling off his tattered *cothamore*, or large outside coat, stood as fine and brawny a specimen of a young warrior as could be seen in those martial times. In a few moments more he had crossed the river, and was standing by the side of his chief, Shane vic an Earla.

“Vic an Earla,” he said, “the men of the forest will be upon us by to-morrow’s sun. I heard the Ridderah Fion and his black friend, Diarmaid, saying so this morning at their gathering under the walls of Kilbeheny.”

Vic an Earla's reply was interrupted by a loud knocking at the outer gate of the castle. On going to see what was the matter, to his great joy he beheld his friend Maolmorrha banging, as was his wont, with his sword-hilt for admittance at the gate. Maolmorrha, on hearing the story, could not repress his satisfaction at the prospect of an encounter with the Ridderah Fion and his men.

"Let him come," said he, "and perhaps he'll not be so eager to come again. We have a castle, a rock, and a river on our side, and plenty of strong arms to defend them; and, in my mind, if the devil came with as many champions as he could muster, we'd be able to make our stand good against him."

Great and hurried were the preparations at both castles that night; and before the dawn of morning the conjoint forces of Vic an Earla and Maolmorrha were mustered in battle array beneath and upon the walls of Ardfinnan, willing, if not able, to repel the onset of the Ridderah Fion and his followers.

The first light of the morning beheld the Ridderah and his forces approaching the ford that led to the castle. The sight that met their eyes, however, a little damped their ardor. On a small space of rock that projected about a dozen feet above the river, the Mulloch Maol, in full armor, sat sword in hand, and motionless as a brazen statue, upon his white steed, his fourteen sons ranged, seven at each side, below him by the water's edge, and all his vassals behind them, eager to cross the river and begin the battle.

The ramparts of the castle were lined by the men of Vic an Earla with their harquebusses in hand, ready to fire upon the enemy, should he attempt to cross the ford and attack them. Diarmaid, the Ridderah's sword-bearer, now advanced to the opposite end of the ford to hold a parley.

"Son of a strumpet," he said, addressing Vic an Earla, who stood upon a turret above the Mulloch Maol, "pay the *eric* for my brother's head, or your own head and your castle and treasures shall be the fine when this day we open a passage to them with our battle-axes."

The Ridderah now rode down to the side of his sword-bearer. "Yes," he exclaimed, "pay the *eric* for the life of the gallant Outlaw of the Gap, or before another hour we'll have a hundred lives for his, and our banner floating from your walls. And you, silly old man," he continued, addressing the Mulloch Maol, "fitter were you at home teaching your fourteen clowns to till your ploughlands than standing there trying to stem the onset of a gallant knight fighting for his just demand."

The Mulloch Maol, who was a man of fiery temper and prompt action, maddened by the taunt of the Ridderah, turned to his sons and followers. "Follow me!" he shouted; and, suiting the action to the word, he sprang his war-horse from the rock into the river beneath, and, with his sons and retainers, stood in a short time upon the opposite bank. In a moment they were, sword in hand, upon

the enemy. In the midst of the contest, and when the besiegers were likely to have the worst of it, the Mulloch Maol singled out the Ridderah, and attacked him with as much agility as if he were in the prime of life. His sword missed its aim, but went sheer through the saddle, and lodged itself deep into the side of the Ridderah's war-horse. The horse sprang into the air, and fell to the earth, bringing the Ridderah, in his heavy armor, down with a clang that gave the clearest intimation to his followers of what had befallen him. This was the turning-point in the fray; for the Ridderah's followers, with the exception of Diarmaid, fled, leaving him a prisoner in the hands of the Mulloch Maol. Great was his surprise, however, when the Mulloch, who made it a point always either to kill his prisoner or set him free altogether, told him that he was at liberty to depart to his forests, but that his life was spared to free the *eric* or fine for the life of Diarmaid's brother, the Outlaw of the Gap. On second thought, too, the Mulloch, considering the Ridderah's great renown as a warrior, invited him and his sword-bearer to a few days' merry-making at his castle of Ballindunney. The Ridderah, though perhaps wishing himself back again safely in his castle, did not find it convenient to refuse; so he accepted the invitation, and the merry-making went on gloriously for two days in the great hall of the Mulloch's castle. At the end of the second day it was time for the Ridderah to depart. He had noticed that there was a great scar-

city of fuel at Ballindunney; the servants having, in fact, to make fires of straw and brambles, for want of better, in consequence of the scantiness of wood in that neighborhood. As some recompense for all the kindness shown him, the Ridderah offered to send an ample supply of wood from his great forests to Ballindunney, which offer the Mulloch Maol, with his usual frankness, gratefully accepted.

Seven days after the departure of the Ridderah, the Mulloch's youngest son descried from the watch-tower of the castle a long line of wagons, laden with the promised firewood, slowly approaching from the ford of Ardfinnan. On their arrival, they were unladen in the great bawn of the castle. Notwithstanding the abundant gratitude manifested by the Ridderah on leaving Ballindunney, and his brotherly sincerity of words, the Mulloch Maol still suspected some treachery in this present of firewood. He examined each load, and found that, along with the timber being cut into logs of the requisite length for burning, some were a little blackened at the end, where, after the saw, they should be smooth and white. The wily old chieftain took one of these suspicious-looking logs, and, examining it more closely, unperceived by the Ridderah's men, found its heart scooped, and filled with a quantity of powder sufficient, on being thrown on the fire, almost to blow up his castle. The Mulloch pretended not to notice what he had discovered, and gave directions as usual that a plentiful dinner should be prepared for

the drivers of the wagons. By the time the dinner was laid in the hall of the castle, the Mulloch's men, by his directions, had made the logs of firewood into a great heap, with the harness of the Ridderah's horses and the wagons placed on the top of them. When the drivers were seated at dinner, among whom was Diarmaid in disguise, a warrior was ordered to stand at the back of each man, with a battleaxe in his hand, and to strike off the head of whomsoever should stir from his seat. At about every five minutes during the dinner, these warriors went round and round the hall, shouting their chieftain's war-cry, and striking the axes against their shields, altogether making a clamor which caused the poor drivers, in their terror, to imagine themselves sitting before their last dinner in this world. When dinner was over, they were ordered out into the bawn, and great was their surprise to see the logs in a blaze, with the wagons and harness upon them. When the flames had reached the logs containing the powder, which were placed about the middle of the pile, logs, harness, and wagons were blown up with a sound which the deceitful Ridderah could easily hear in his castle of Kilbeheny. The drivers were now directed to range themselves before the castle-gate; and, by the Mulloch's commands, their horses were then brought from the stables and given back to them.

"Dogs," said the fiery old warrior, "is this the recompense your chieftain sends me for granting

him his life? Ride and tell your master that, should he ever get into Maolmorrha MacSweeny's hands again, his head shall pay the forfeit for his treachery."

The drivers, with Diarmaid at their head, needed no second injunction to depart; so away they went upon their horses, as if a legion of Mulloch Maols was in their track, till they reached their native forests by the Funchleon. Diarmaid told Maolmorrha's message to his master; but the Ridderah Fion, fearing some mishap like the former one, and setting a due value on his head, never more visited the castles of Ballindunney and Ardfinnan.





THE FIRST AND LAST LORDS OF FÉRMOY.

A LEGEND OF THE FUNCHEON.

IT was a fine June morning in the year 1216. The sun shone down merrily on river and shore, and gleamed brilliantly from the accoutrements of a herald, who, attended by two squires, was riding leisurely through the green forest towards the strong castle of Glanworth, in the county of Cork, at that time possessed by Sir William Flemming, Baron of Fermoy. This Sir William Flemming was one of those hardy Norman adventurers who came to Ireland under Strongbow, Earl of Pembroke, and who, after fighting in many a hard battle against the natives, at last gained for himself the fair district of Fermoy, built in the centre of it the great castle of Glanworth, on the banks of the Funcheon, and there sat down to spend the remainder of his life in peace and in the enjoyment of his hard-won possessions.

But perfect peace rarely falls to the lot of man. Sir William Flemming had an only child, his daughter

Amy, celebrated both for her beauty and her goodness, and whose hand soon became sought for in marriage by many of the powerful chiefs around. Amy Flemming, however, was as hard to be pleased in a husband as she was good and beautiful, and refused all their offers. Among her suitors was Sir William Cantoun, or Condon, a knight of Norman-Welsh descent, whose father had won for himself the barony of Condons, adjoining that of Fermoy. This Sir William resided in great state at the strong castle of Cloghlea, whose ruins may yet be seen standing on a high limestone rock above the Funcheon, a few miles from its junction with the noble Blackwater. It was from him that the herald and his two attendants were now approaching Sir William Flemming's castle of Glanworth. A ford at this time crossed the river, where now rise the arches of the narrow and picturesque bridge, a short distance below the castle. Through this ford the herald and his two attendants dashed their horses merrily across; and, approaching the principal gate, or barbican, of the castle, demanded admittance in the name of their master, Sir William Cantoun. They were admitted with all the deference and courtesy accorded in those chivalric days to a herald, and conducted into the great hall, where they requested an audience from Sir William Flemming.

"I come," said the herald, as the stout old baron made his appearance, "with two presents from my Lord of Cloghlea. This pearl chaplet he bids me

offer thy daughter, the Lady Amy, and demands through me her hand in marriage. In case she refuse his present and his offer, I am commissioned to offer thee this." And he produced a steel gauntlet, which he laid before the Baron of Fermoy.

"To my daughter I leave the acceptance or rejection of such gauds," answered Sir William Flemming: "We will call her into thy presence, and see how she takes thy suit. Now," continued he, as the fair Amy, attended by her maids, entered the hall, "make thine offer again, and I will abide by her decision."

"Lady Amy," said the herald, "my master, Sir William Cantoun, sends thee this fair chaplet, and asks thee to become Lady of Cloghlea and the green woods around it. What is thine answer?"

Amy looked for a moment at her father, but saw in his face no expression by which she could judge one way or the other of his sentiments.

"Take it back," she said at length, as she drew up her fair and stately figure. "The knight whose iron mace is ever raised oppressively over the heads of the poor peasantry, whose hand is red always with unjust blood, he shall be no husband of mine. Thou hast my answer." And, with a haughty and indignant look at the herald, she withdrew with her maids.

"And now," said Sir William Flemming, as his daughter left the hall, "to me it is left to pay thee due courtesy. I accept this." And he took up the

steel glove with a grim smile. "Tell thy master to come as speedily as he lists, and that I and my crossbow men, and riders-at-arms, will give him the reception that befits his state from the ramparts of Glanworth."

And so the herald again crossed the ford, and rode back to his master.

But it seems that Sir William Flemming miscalculated the power and influence possessed at that time by the fiery Baron of Cloghlea. These were days, when in Ireland, and in fact throughout every country in Europe, the strong hand with lance and sword held the place that the law holds at the present period. Each lord and baron was his own lawgiver, — a petty prince, who, after paying his tribute to the government, held himself absolved from all other obligations, and ruled his territories, and made war and peace with his neighbors, according to the dictates of his own will. And so it was with Sir William Cantoun.

That night the warder, as he looked from his watchtower on the summit of Glanworth Castle, could see the whole wide plain to the eastward ablaze with the signal fires of the wrathful Baron of Cloghlea. During several succeeding nights the same portentous fires threw up their lurid glare into the calm, still sky; and day by day, by castle and town and hamlet, fierce riders spurred hither and thither to chief and vassal, summoning them to take up arms, and back the quarrel of their stout

suzerain, till at length a large and formidable army was collected around the castle of Sir William Cantoun. Not content with this gathering, however, he sent for help to O'Keefe, the native and hereditary chief of the whole country stretching along the northern shore of the Blackwater, and obtained it, together with the aid of another Irish chief equally powerful.

With this formidable army, Sir William Cantoun marched westward from his castle, and began to lay waste the territories of the Baron of Fermoy. After going with fire and sword along all the eastern portion of the district, he at length reached Glanworth Castle, and sat down before its walls to commence a regular siege. A siege in those days was a very different affair from what it has come to be in more modern times. There were then no cannon; and the only method of battering down walls consisted in the use of engines, which, on the introduction of gunpowder, were thrown aside as unavailable in warfare, and of which we now scarcely remember the names. Yet with engine, arbalist, crossbow, and javelin, Sir William Cantoun plied the castle, till, in a few days, the besieged were reduced to sore distress. At this stage, the Baron of Cloghlea again demanded the hand of Amy Flemming, but was again refused.

On the fourth day the sun that lit the fierce faces of the combatants in and around Glanworth was also reflected from the points of ten spears that

were stuck, handle downward, in the soft sward of a little glade in the midst of the great forest that then clothed the back of the wild mountain range that walls in the territory of Fermoy to the southward, and ends in the romantic peak of Corrin Thierna. Their owners, as many knights, were sitting lazily upon the grass beside them, enjoying their noontide meal, while their horses were scattered along the glade in the exercise of the same agreeable occupation. The leader of this group was a young man of great stature and noble bearing, with light-colored hair, and a fine, sun-embrowned visage, that looked all the better from a small white scar that extended obliquely down his high forehead. His name was Richard de Rupe, or Roche. His father, Sir Adam de Rupe, fighting under the banners of Strongbow and Fitzstephen, had come into possession of the barony of Rosscarberry, and there built a magnificent castle on the river Bandon, called Poulne-long, whose ruins still remain to attest its former strength and splendor. On his death, his son, Richard de Rupe, succeeded him; and was on his way on the day in question to visit another strong castle of his, on the northern frontier of the county Cork. The whole band were chatting gayly upon various subjects as the meal proceeded.

They were at length disturbed, however, by the appearance of a horseman above them on the bare side of a hill, who came down at full speed upon

their left, with the intention of making his way downward into the southern plain.

"A prize, a prize!" exclaimed Sir Gilbert Ridenford and a few other young knights, starting to their feet, and buckling on their helmets. "By the hand of the Conqueror, a prize and adventure both!" And they ran towards their steeds, which each mounted at a single bound. Then, catching their spears in their hands, they sat looking towards their leader, for liberty to ride after the stranger, who was passing on the left without perceiving them.

"Away!" exclaimed Sir Richard de Rupe. "He will be but a small prize, indeed. But, if he carry nothing else, he may tell us some news; for every Irishman is chockful of that commodity."

Away dashed the wild young knights down the woods, till they came to the bottom of a deep valley, through which they knew the strange horseman must pass; and there, after much doubling and twisting, they at length captured him, and led him in triumph to their comrades.

"Gold, gold!" shouted one of them derisively, as the captive came sullenly in. "Search him, Sir Gilbert: I will wager he hath a treasure."

"I will barter my steed, trappings and all, against a jew's donkey, but he hath the elixir of life hid in his pocket," exclaimed another.

"What errand ridest thou?" asked Sir Richard de Rupe, in a commanding but respectful tone, which drew an answer from the captured horseman.

He told them the substance of what is related above, and that he was riding southward to the castle of Sir Maurice Fitzgerald to beg aid for his master, the Baron of Fermoy, in his sore distress.

"There!" said Ridenford, "I told thee an adventure would come of it; and now what is to be done?"

"First, to let the courier go," answered de Rupe. "We will hold counsel as we ride along."

The courier waited no further liberty, but, turning his horse, rode down through the woods at the same headlong pace with which he came. The result of their consultation, as they rode over the range of mountains and crossed the Blackwater, was that the nine knights should remain in the forest near, while their leader rode forward to the beleagured castle of Glanworth, and demanded admittance to its lord. The warlike customs of those days were strangely different from those of the present. Sir Richard de Rupe, on reaching the besieging army, at once caused himself to be brought before the Baron of Cloghlea, and made his request; which was granted without hesitation and with the utmost courtesy. And thus he was admitted into the castle of Glanworth.

"Sir William Flemming," said he to the old baron, who received him in the hall, "I have come to offer thee the service of my arm in thy strait. My father, Adam de Rupe, was, I believe, once thy companion-in-arms."

The baron took his hand with a friendly grasp. "Ah!" he said, "I remember him well, and a brave companion he was. And thou, — thou art welcome to my poor hall of Glanworth; although, God wot!" continued he, with a sad smile, "I fear thy single arm will make but small change in our affairs; for we are indeed sore beset."

"I have nine other knights at my back," said De Rupe. "Could we not send them word of thy plight, and make a bold sally upon the besiegers, during which they might suddenly mingle with the combatants, and get entrance as we withdraw?"

"I fear no entrance can be gained for more than thee," answered Flemming. "Yesterday we tried that ruse, to get in a small body of auxiliaries; but, by my faith! we were all beaten back, and half our expected aid slain. Save that my old friend, Sir Maurice Fitzgerald, come speedily with a large force to relieve us, I fear me there is but small hope for us; for the bloody Cantoun and his followers are pressing us too hotly."

"How long canst thou hold out, in case the aid come?" asked De Rupe.

"Not longer than another day, I fear me," answered Flemming. "The foe are in possession of every available spot around the castle, and have already half battered down the gates."

"Then," said De Rupe, after a pause, "there is but one plan, and that is to offer myself to do battle with axe and sword against Sir William Cantoun for the hand of thy daughter."

"It is a brave plan," said the baron, "and one that well befits thy father's son. But I have sworn by my knightly word, no matter what haps, to let my daughter choose for herself. If she choose thee for a husband, then I give my consent to the trial by combat: and I doubt not but Cantoun will accept of thy challenge; for whatever else he may be, he assuredly is brave. I will call my daughter, and do thou propose thy plan to her thyself."

The beautiful Amy Flemming was again brought into the hall.

"Fair lady," said De Rupe, "I would wish to woo thee in another and more befitting way, but cannot, as thou seest. Wilt thou consent that I should do battle with Sir William Cantoun for thy hand? With thy bright eyes to look upon me in the struggle, I hope to do my devoir as becomes a knight, and free thy father from his worst foe."

Amy scanned the fine face and fair proportions of the young knight with a pleased eye. There was but little time for deliberation, for even then they heard the foe hammering at the gate.

"Yes," she said, while a blush of maiden modesty mantled her beautiful face. "My father is now brought to sore distress. Art thou relieve him and me from our foe, I will be thy bride."

That night, notwithstanding the sad case of the besieged, a merry revel was held in the hall of Glanworth Castle. The fair Amy sat at the board; and, as she talked to the young De Rupe, her heart

confirmed the consent she was forced to give so suddenly the preceding evening. The next morning's sun shone gayly down upon the many bright objects around the castle,—the polished armor of the knights as they stalked to and fro directing the movements of the besiegers; the waving banners on plain and tower; the light lances of the kern; the ponderous swords, bucklers, and battle-axes of the heavy footmen, who were now gathering in a mass with 'scaling-ladders, to make a final attack upon the besieged. At this juncture, a white flag was suddenly raised from the highest tower of the barbican, and its appearance caused for a moment a suspension of hostilities on both sides. Immediately after, a herald rode forth from the gate, and demanded to be brought into the presence of the Baron of Cloghlea.

"Sir William Cantoun," said the herald, "I come to offer thee single combat on the part of Sir Richard de Rupe, good knight and true, now in the castle, for the hand of the Lady Amy."

"And what if I refuse?" answered the Knight of Cloghlea, with a bitter smile. "The castle, father and daughter, champion and all, will be soon in my hands, without the trouble of trial by combat."

"Then," said the herald, "Sir Richard de Rupe bids me say that he will proclaim thee recreant and coward through all the lands of Christendom, and false to thy badge of knighthood."

"That were, indeed, a hard alternative," answered

Cantoun. "But it shall never be said that William of Cloghlea refused the challenge of any mortal man. I accept thy defiance, sir herald, and will meet him at noon with axe and sword, on foot, on this very spot, and in sight of all."

Noon came, and saw the besiegers all gathering round a level spot outside the barbican gate of Glanworth, and the besieged, with eager faces, crowding on the walls to witness the combat; while the beautiful Amy sat with her maids at a high turret-window that overlooked the scene, her face pale and her heart throbbing, and her white hands clasped in prayer for the success of her young and gallant champion. What must have been her feelings when at length she saw the two adversaries approach each other warily, under the cover of their broad shields, each with axe in hand, poised and ready to begin the combat?

And now the axes were crossed, and again came down for some time alternately, with loud clanging, upon the interposed shields. Hotter and hotter grew the combat, till at last the axe of de Rupe crashed in through the shoulder-plate of Cantoun, making the blood flow out upon his arm and breast. This aroused the full fury of Sir William Cantoun, who was one of the most celebrated knights of his time for strength and prowess. He raised his axe suddenly, as if about to deliver a heavy blow upon the hip of de Rupe; but, changing the direction of the stroke, the ponderous weapon came down with

full force upon the helmet of his antagonist, making him reel backward a few paces, and at length fall to the ground over the body of a dead archer that lay behind him. Now this archer had been slain in the very act of poisoning his crossbow, which lay beside him drawn, and with the arrow in, under the very hand of de Rupe as he fell. Whether it was according to the laws of single combat, on the part of de Rupe, we will not say; but, as he fell, he grasped the drawn crossbow in his hand, raised it as he half lay upon the ground, and discharged it at his adversary as he advanced to despatch him, piercing him with the arrow through one of the joints of his armor. The arrow entered Sir William Cantoun's left side, and pierced in an upward direction through his heart; on which he fell heavily to the ground, and in a few moments expired. His body was borne away with loud lamentations by his sorrowing vassals: O'Keefe and the other chieftains departed with their followers, and Sir William Flemming was left once more in peaceable possession of his castle and domains. The lovely Amy and her champion were soon after married. The young knights assisted at the bridal ceremony, and wondered at, and laughed heartily over, the good fortune of their leader.

"By my fay!" said Sir Gilbert Ridenford to Cantemar, his brother-in-arms, after they had danced a few merry measures down the great hall, "I told thee this was an enchanted land. I will ride forth

to-morrow in quest of an adventure for myself, and try and win a fair bride like our leader."

Amy was the sole heiress of Sir William Fleming; and, at his death, her husband, in her right, succeeded to the possession of the fair territory of Fermoy, which was in his lifetime raised to a lordship. And thus Sir Richard de Rupe, or Roche, won those fertile lands, and became the first lord of Fermoy, and the progenitor of a long line of barons, distinguished for their princely hospitality, their prowess, and often for their patriotic devotedness to the cause of their native land.

Pass we now over a period of some centuries, during which the successive lords of Fermoy lived, loved, fought, and died within their fair territory, like brave Norman-Irish nobles as they were, till we come to that stormy time when Ireland and the sister island groaned beneath the iron rule of the victorious usurper, Cromwell. Maurice, eighth Viscount Fermoy, was at this time a man in the prime of life. His father David, after suffering severely in the great Desmond insurrection of 1598, was recompensed for his losses in the succeeding reign. Several large grants of land, partly from the forfeited estates of the Earl of Desmond, were given him by James the First; and, living peaceably for a long period in his ancestral home, he at length became one of the richest noblemen in Ireland. After the accession of the unfortunate Charles to the throne of England, and the breaking out of the great insur-

rection of 1641 in Ireland, this David retired to France with his family, and a regiment he had raised within his own territory, and there died, leaving his estates, worth, it is said, fifty thousand pounds yearly, to his eldest son Maurice, the eighth lord of Fermoy.

The estates to which Maurice succeeded were, however, in a very insecure position from the sad state of the country at the time. North and south, east and west, the baleful fires of war were glaring redly throughout the land. Sanctimonious Puritan, hot-headed native chief, and cautious noble of the Pale, were then battling with savage ferocity; some for the rebellious Parliament, some for the weal of their native land, some for the unfortunate King Charles, and a great many, with sorrow be it said, for their own aggrandizement.

Among those that held stoutly and faithfully to the last to the colors of both king and country was Maurice of Fermoy. When the oppressed Catholics, at length banded together, formed the Confederation, and sent their deputies to Kilkenny to redress their wrongs, Viscount Fermoy took his place in the Parliament then formed among the Peers, while several gentlemen of his own name attended the Commons. This was in the stormy year 1646. On the breaking up of the Confederation, Viscount Fermoy, with many of the gentlemen of his house, again took up arms against Cromwell and his generals; but gained by his loyalty only defeat and

forfeiture. He fled, an outlawed man, to Flanders, and thus lost the castled home and fair patrimony won so gallantly by his great ancestor, Sir Richard de Rupe. We will follow him a little further, however, and show how faithfully he still adhered to his unscrupulous monarch, and how he was rewarded for his devotedness.

In a somewhat small room in an ancient Flemish town, towards the close of the last year of the banishment of Charles the Second, that monarch sat with a few of his exiled nobles around a table, on one end of which were arranged the materials for a supper. Charles and his comrades at this time led a somewhat rakish life, notwithstanding their poverty and their many troubles. On the evening in question, he and two of his favorites were sitting at the head of the table, and deeply engaged in a game, then very fashionable, namely, *primero*. A small heap of gold coins was placed before each of the players, while another — the stake — lay at the foot of the little lamp that gave them light for their game. A jovial smile played over the features of the “merry monarch,” as he raised the last card of his deal, and threw it triumphantly upon those of his companions.

“Ha!” he exclaimed, laughing, “two hearts, — two hearts, and my bonnie ace upon their necks! By my sovereign word! an’ I win this, I shall be a second Cræsus ere the morning. The game is mine.” And he swept the stake over to his side.

"My lord," said one of the players, smiling, "fortune seems to smile continually upon thy head to-night. And touching that same golden monarch your majesty was pleased to name just now, had we him here, thou wert sure to succeed to his treasures. But, with us poor spendthrifts, thou wilt not be much richer, an' thou win all our store."

"By my father's wise head! no," said the monarch, glancing at the diminutive heaps of gold. "But, come! another game, and a fig for Dame Fortune, that will not stand to me in sterner play than this!" And he took up the cards, and began shuffling and dealing them with no inexperienced hand.

Game after game now, however, went against the monarch. The heap of gold, whose size he had augmented in the beginning of the evening, now began to dwindle away gradually, till at last he was reduced to one solitary coin. The cards were dealt once more, and began to fly down quickly upon the table.

"Now for a dash in Dame Fortune's face!" said the king, as he held again his last card in his hand, and threw it. "Ha! by my kingly hand! lost,—lost!" continued he as he saw the game go against him. "And now, to borrow,—to borrow! who will lend?"

"Borrow and beg," exclaimed the young nobleman to his left, with a careless laugh, "by my knightly word! but they are trades we are all expert in now-a-days. I will become your majesty's treas-

urer for the present, and, unlike the stubborn, crop-eared Parliament, supply thy wants to the uttermost of my poor means." And he handed over the greater part of his supply to the king. At that moment a lackey entered the apartment, and stood respectfully near the door.

"Ha! Hilson, what now?" said the king, arranging the little heap of gold before him.

"Sire," answered the attendant, "a gentleman is now in the waiting-room, who craves speech with your majesty."

"His name? his name?" inquired the king, with a lazy yawn.

"He gave no name, sire," answered the attendant, "but he bade me tell your majesty that he was your friend of Mayence."

"My friend of Mayence," said the king. "Ah!" continued he to his companions, "I have good reason to remember him. He is one of my wild Irish lords, who, not content to lose his patrimony in my cause, still contrives to help me in my troubles. Marry! I would wish there were many like him. Send him into our presence, Hilson; but, ere he comes," and he gave a light and careless laugh, "we must put our trumps and aces from before his roving eyes. Away with them, for I know what he brings; and now to supper."

The cards were removed by one of the young noblemen, and the king and his companions were seated innocently at supper as the stranger entered.

The latter was muffled in the long military cloak of the period; and as he stepped over respectfully, and dropped on one knee before the king, the young noblemen could not help casting a glance of approval at each other at his manly bearing, tall figure, and handsome, bronzed countenance.

"Arise, my Lord of Fermoy," said the king: "thou art welcome to our poor lodging. It grieves us we cannot welcome thee in better state; but come, arise, and partake with us of this sorry fare our rebellious subjects have driven us to subsist on."

"My liege," answered Maurice, Lord of Fermoy (for it was he), "before I rise, let me present your majesty with this." And he produced a heavy bag of gold from under his long cloak. "It is the poor pay of myself and some of my kinsmen. Small as it is, — it is all we have, — I trust it may relieve thy necessities for a short time. A day will soon come, I trust, when thou wilt hold thine own again, and have small need of the poor contributions of thy devoted subjects." And he laid the bag of gold upon the table before the king.

"We accept of it, my Lord of Fermoy," said the king, raising him, "and with the more pleasure that the day is coming — yes, times are changing momentarily in our favor — when we can recompense thee tenfold for this and many another kindness. The day that sees us restored to our throne and to our rights shall also see thee in the enjoyment of thy lost lands and thy native home. Arise, and let us to supper."

And thus Maurice, Lord of Fermoy, and his brave kinsmen, spent their pay during their military service in Flanders. They shared it with their king during his exile; and, when the Protector died, and Charles II. was restored to his throne, they naturally expected a reversal of their attainder, and a return to their native land and to their homes and properties. But when Viscount Fermoy, and the numerous kinsmen of his that had lost their estates in the cause of the king and his unfortunate predecessor, presented their petition at court, the light and faithless Charles the Second, instead of remembering their devotedness and his own plighted word, only laughed at them, put them off from day to day, and at length, in his "Declaration of Royal Gratitude," named one of that gallant house, Capt. Miles Roche, only, as eligible for reward for "services beyond the sea." Viscount Fermoy, after the failure of his hopes and the loss of his noble patrimony, left his native land forever, and died with a broken heart far away in a foreign land, illustrating a lesson that was well taught to the head of many a gallant house in those troublous days by the "merry monarch," namely, "put not thy trust in princes."





THE CHASE FROM THE HOSTEL.

A LEGEND OF MALLOW.

IN the days of the Williamite wars, Mallow was one of the most important military stations in the south of Ireland. The town at this period—that is, the newly-built portion of it—consisted of between two and three hundred houses, many of which were strongly built, and fitted for defence in case of siege. The old portion of the town, or, as it was called by the inhabitants, Ballydaheen, lay on the southern bank of the Blackwater, and communicated with its new and more fashionable neighbor by a long, narrow, stone bridge, easily fortified, and rendered impassable in time of war by its proximity to the castle which commanded it. Ballydaheen at that time consisted almost exclusively of houses of entertainment for man and horse; but, of all its hostels, not one was half so well patronized, by peasant, soldier, and Rapparee, as that of Murty Goold, which lay a few perches up a narrow street that

opened into the more public one which led to the new town over the bridge. Various causes tended to the success of Murty's hostel; the principal of which were, that he was known in Ballydaheen and the wide country round to be a good man, and true in the cause of King James, to be the jolliest companion over the can that was ever born in Mallow, and that in his shop were to be found the best and cheapest beer, brandy, wine, and *usquebaugh* in Munster.

It was a hot August day, somewhat more than a month after the battle of the Boyne, and Murty Goold was sitting in his shop before a half-emptied can of beer, singing to himself a consolatory lament over the fallen fortunes of King James, when he was aroused from his euphonious reveries by the halting of a pair of horsemen at his door. Leaving both his can of beer and desolation of spirit behind him, Murty hastened out with a sudden and hilarious glow on his countenance to welcome his customers, who, after directing their horses to be led into the stable at the back of the premises, walked into the drinking-room inside the shop.

"An' now," said Murty, as he entered the room, after attending to the wants of the horses, "in the name o' the fiend! Theige O'Cooney an' Donogh O'Brin both, what brings ye here at this time o' day, when General S'gravenmore an' his bloody Danes are in the town? An'," he continued, as the two horsemen threw off their long *cothamores*, and laid them

on the table, "when ye came at all, why did ye come in yeer back-an'-breasts an' helmets, an' wid sword an' pistol an' gun, like two ginerals of cavalthry?"

"I'll tell you what, Murt," answered Theige O'Cooney, "myself an' this nate step-brother o' mine, Donough, were afther ridin' from Duhallow under the hot sun, till our throats became as dry as the pipe o' Rodeen Gow's bellows; an' we said to ourselves, as we gained the top o' the hill above, that the devil resave the step farther we'd ride without paying Murty Goold a visit, an' drinking some o' his beer, — a rattling can of it, Murt. What do we care about Gineral Skavinger an' his blue-coated Danes?"

"Arrah! what Danes?" said Donogh O'Brin. "When they surrounded Theige an' myself on the Inch beyant, the day that the MacDonogh an' his army were driven from before the town, didn't we cut thro' them, the set o' cowardly fools, — didn't we slash thro' them, I say, side by side, an' soord in hand, as we'd go thro' a bank o' rotten sedge by the river shore? An' are we afraid o' them now? Arrah! bring in the beer; an' you an' I an' Theige will have a roarin' bout at the tankard, if ould Skravinger and his blue-coats were burnin' the house around us."

"Very well," said Murty; "but, in the manetime, we'll put Shaneen the Hawk on the watch, for fear o' their coming on us onawares. Here, Shaneen!" he continued, as he went out to the shop, and

addressed himself to a swarthy, 'cute-eyed, little atomy of a boy that stood at the door. "Off with you to the bridge, an' be on the look-out for the blue-coats; for you know, as well as I do, who's inside." Shaneen the Hawk started off on the instant, while his master went to a huge barrel at the end of the shop, and commenced drawing the beer, accompanying the operation with the remainder of that elegiac and melancholious strain in which he was interrupted by the arrival of the two Rapparee horsemen.

Theige O'Cooney and Donogh O'Brin, his step-brother, were at that time, and in that broad district, two Rapparee leaders of valor and renown, whose exploits against the Williamite soldiers are still sung in many a rude ballad, and narrated by the peasantry in wild and stirring legends, around their winter firesides. Each was in the prime of life, and somewhat above the middle stature; each possessed that iron, brawny, and well-knit frame that enables its possessor to undergo any amount of fatigue without flagging; and in the bright eye and darkly-bronzed features of both could be read that jovial and headlong bravery which characterized many a gallant Rapparee of that warlike time. While Murty was drawing the beer, Theige and his step-brother were depositing their weapons of offence on the table, in order to be prepared for any sudden emergency; and, on the entrance of the jolly landlord with two foaming cans, pointed out to him with much satisfaction their formidable array.

"Look," exclaimed Theige, seizing one of the cans of beer, and taking a long and copious draught, "look at those, man, and say how would the blue-coats like a taste o' them. There are two blunderbusses with twenty bullets in each ; and there are four pistols that myself an' Donogh took from the two trooper captains we killed in the fray of Barna. An' with this, an' this," he continued, pointing to the long and heavy swords they wore at their sides, "don't you think we're safe in spending a few jovial hours, or a jolly night even, under your sign o' the Crowin' Cock, in Ballydaheen? Here's to you, Murt, an' to you, Donogh; an' may all our foes follow the sowl o' Schomberg, the ould sinner!"

"I cannot drink to that," said Donogh, "while Murt is empty-handed. Off with you, Murt, an' bring in a can for yourself, an' then we'll drink to the tatheration of our foes, with Theige."

Murt obeyed the mandate with unusual celerity, and returned with a well-filled tankard. "Here," he said, "I'll drink your toast in the words o' the song that Gulielmis O'Callaghan, the Kanturk schoolmaster, made a few hours before he was hanged by S'gravenmore's troopers:—

"'Bad luck to ould bandy-legged Schomberg,
King William and Mary also!
For 'tis they that did wather ould Ireland
With bloodshed an' murther an' woe.
Ould Schomberg ——'

"Begad! I forget the rest. But, as to the Crowin'

Cock, there's a bird outside on the bridge, in the shape o' Shancen the Hawk, that I think will crow, an' give you warnin' o' S'gravenmore's troopers."

"Sowl o' my body, man!" exclaimed Donogh, "did the ould Skavinger an' his troopers ever skin you alive, that you have him so often on your tongue with thrimbliu' and terror? Here, man, give us another can o' beer; an' Theige there will give us a song instead o' those murtherin' toasts he's so very fond o' dhrinkin'."

"No," exclaimed Theige, "I never sing a song till after finishing the fourth can o' beer, an' even then I must have a flagon o' wine or brandy to smoothen my windpipe before I begin."

In process of time the fourth can was finished, together with a few tankards of wine into the bargain; and Theige, on being asked for his song, sat back with great hilarity in his chair, and began a sonorous strain in the vernacular, of which the following is a translation:—

"MOLL ROONE.

"THERE'S a girl in Kilmurry, — my own loved one, —
The loveliest colleen that the sun shines on:
Her eyes are as bright as the May-tide moon,
And the devil a girl like my own Moll Roone!

I mounted my steed in the evening brown,
And away I spurred till the storm came down,
Away over mountains and moorlands dun,
Till I came to the cottage of my own Moll Roone.

I sat me down by the bogwood fire,
And I said that her love was my heart's desire ;
And she gave me her love, — oh ! she granted my boon,
And my heart was glad for my own Moll Roone.

Come ! what is the use of a brave brown steed,
But to spur to the doing of a gallant deed ?
And what is the use of a sword or gun,
But to fight for a girl like my own Moll Roone ?

As I rode down the mountains one Saturday night,
The valley below was one blaze of light ;
And I found out its meaning full sadly and soon,
'Twas the foe fired the cottage of my own Moll Roone.

I spurred thro' Blackwater, o'er brake and moor,
I spurred thro' the foe to her cottage door :
There my sword cleft the skull of a Dutch dragoon,
And I bore away in triumph my own Moll Roone."

"Hurra !" exclaimed Donogh, at the termination of the song, "wasn't that nate, Murt ? An' be the morthial gor o' war ! but every word in it is true. Another flagon o' wine, Murt, till we drink success to Theige's windpipe, an' confusion to our foes."

"By the faith of a true man !" exclaimed Murt, with a ludicrous attempt at feigning terror on his jolly countenance, "but, if Shaneen the Hawk's face speaks truth, both of you will have somethin' to do to bear away your own carcasses in triumph from ould S'gravenmore an' his blue dragoons."

"They're comin' ! they're comin' !" said Shaneen, as he rushed into the room ; "the bloody throopers

are comin' to kill an' quarther an' murther every mother's sowl o' ye. I thought they were only settin' off for Kanturk, bad luck to them! but they circumwinted me, an' turned back in a gallop over the bridge; an' —— listen! listen, Theige! here they come rattlin' up the street! Bad luck to Brian Boru, the morthial ould thief, that didn't kill every murthurin' Dane in the uniwersal world, when he had them under his thumb-nail!"

"Give us another tankard, Murt," exclaimed both the brothers, as they started up and seized their arms. "An' you, Shaneen Brighteye, away with you into the stable," said Theige, "an' lade the horses into the kitchen, an' have them ready to bring out through the shop-door when we want them. An' now, Murt," continued he, as he seized his tankard, "here is death to our foes! Whatever men lie on the ground when all is over, be sure to search their pockets well; for they are all laden with the spoil, the goold, an' riches of our native land."

The clatter of many horses was now heard outside in the street, together with the words of command directing the men to wheel right and left, and block up the door at either side. Another officer was heard directing a party of men to hurry round and occupy the backyard and stables, in case the Rapparees should make an attempt to escape in that direction. Shaneen the Hawk now rushed in.

"They're back in the stables, Theige," he ex-

claimed ; “but the horses are in the kitchen, an’ the door is boulded inside. An’ now, Murt,” continued the brave little fellow, “give me the hatchet in the shop ; an’ the first Dane that puts his head in thro’ the window for a peep, I will chop it off, as Mur-rogh na Thua did to the Spy of Ballar.”

All was silent now within and without. At length a voice was heard outside, commanding the two brave brothers to come forth, and submit to the sad doom that awaited them. “Come forth,” it said, “ye Amoritish dogs, and die the death to which ye were predestined from the beginning. I thank the God of the true and chosen, that has ordained me, Zerubabel Stubbs, his unworthy servant, to be the instrument of your destruction. Come forth, I say ; for the sword is made sharp for your rebellious bodies, and the cord is slipperied with the grease of swine for your lying throats, that oft raised the cry for the massacre of the chosen of the Lord, in the day of battle.”

“It is ould Babel Stubbs, the informer,” exclaimed Donogh ; “but his hour is come.”

“An’ nōw,” said Murty Goold, in a whisper, “if ye’re to be off, off with ye : but ’tis miraclis if ye’re not caught, like two foxes in a thrap ; for, as I was givin’ the hatchet to Shaneen, I cast an eye out, and saw the narrow street blocked up at each side o’ the door with a press o’ min, soord in hand.”

“We’ll make a road through them,” replied Theige, “like Miles the Slasher made through the

Scotch at the Battle o' Benburb. An' now, Donogh," he continued, "look to the primin' o' your blunderbuss, an' follow me."

With their pistols in their belts, and their blunderbusses ready cocked in their hands, Theige and Donogh went side by side to the door, at each side of which, in the narrow street, the dragoons were ranged in fours, on the watch, awaiting their exit. Little did Zerubabel Stubbs dream of the answer he and his host were to get to his alluring summons.

"An' now, Donogh," said Theige, in a whisper, "let you take the murthurin' dogs to the left, — an' be sure not to miss ould Babel Stubbs, — an' I'll take the robbin' wolves to the right. Ready!" he shouted, "hurra for Righ Shamus, an' his brave men that now range the wood!"

And, at the word, the two blunderbusses were discharged with deadly effect, right and left, bringing down Babel Stubbs and six or eight troopers at one side, and about the same number killed and wounded on the other. A scene of the wildest confusion ensued. Wounded horses leaped and neighed in terror, stumbled and kicked, and fell in the narrow street; and the remaining troopers, wheeling round their terrified steeds, fled in blind panic from their position down the narrow lanes of Ballydaheen.

"Out with the horses, Shaneen," exclaimed Theige, as he looked around, "out with them, quick; for now is our time, while the thremblin' fools are scattered."

Shaneen the Hawk, still holding the hatchet in his hand, led out the horses, one after the other, into the street.

"Blood o' my body! Shaneen," said Donogh, vaulting into his saddle, "look at ould Babel's finger, the perjured ould son o' Satan: there is the very ring he cut from your mother's finger on the day that she an' your father an' all were murdered by the throops at the Ford o' the Mill."

Shaneen sprang upon the dead body of Zerubabel Stubbs with a wild cry; and, with a blow of the hatchet, severed the finger that carried his hapless mother's marriage-ring from the informer's hand. Taking off the ring, he held it up to the two Rapparees.

"Ha, ha!" he shouted, in his shrill, vindictive voice, "I have it at last. An', if you let me list with your brave min, Theige, that keep the forest, 't isn't the last blow I'll give the throops, to revenge my poor mother and my people."

"Very well, Brighteye," answered Theige, "come to us to-morrow, an' by the bones o' my father! but you'll be a gallant captain yet. An' now, Murty Goold," he continued, turning to that worthy, "don't forget the haversacks an' pockets o' th' ould Skavenger's troopers. Farewell." And away dashed the two bold Rapparees, side by side, down the street.

Murty Goold obeyed the injunction of Theige O'Cooney; and, searching and ransacking among

the pockets and haversacks of the slain troopers, found a share of spoil—the plunder of many a ruined dwelling in town and hamlet—that enabled him that night to decamp without loss from his house of entertainment, and set off for Cork, where he set up an establishment of an equally flourishing description, and where, in process of time, he became a burgess, and ultimately the jolliest alderman in the city.

Away dashed Theige and his brother towards the bridge, on the middle of which, as they went up at full gallop, a sergeant and four troopers stood to bar their way. Each threw his bridle loose on his horse's neck, and, drawing the pistol from the left holster, dashed with his sword upon the astonished Danes. Both fired as they went, bringing down the unfortunate sergeant and one of his comrades with a dull crash on the hard pavement, and, sweeping past the remainder, rattled up the long street. As they dashed on, the troopers on the bridge, recovering from their surprise and panic, fired their musketoons after them. One of the bullets wounded Donogh's horse in the leg, and another struck the ridge on Theige's helmet, throwing him for a moment forward on the neck of his horse.

"Ha, ha!" he cried. "A good shot, truly; but 'tis the first one I ever got from behind. Away, Donogh, away, I say! Look behind: there's a whole rígement o' the blue thieves rattlin' over the bridge afther us."

Away up the long, stony street they clattered with three troops of General S'gravenmore's dragoons in hot pursuit behind them. On gaining a small hillock outside the town, they turned their horses eastward, and, breaking through copse and over fence, swept down at full speed by the Blackwater side. They now began for a while to distance their pursuers; but the dogged Danes kept like bloodhounds on their track in a dull, unvarying, but sure gallop for mile on mile of forest and plain. As the two brothers had swept ahead of their pursuers about half a mile, and were crossing a little stream that emptied itself into the river Blackwater, Donogh's horse began to slacken his speed and fail in consequence of his wounded leg. Urging him on with voice and spur, he endeavored for a time to keep up with the speed of the wild and splendid mare bestrode by his brother Theige; but, despite all his exertions, the poor horse began to flag more and more, so that Theige had at length to slacken his speed in order to keep by his side.

"It is useless," exclaimed Donogh at length. "Away with you, Theige, and leave me behind, to die as my father did before me, — like a man."

"Never," answered Theige. "It shall never be said of Theige O'Cooney by his comrades at the camp-fire, an' by his gineral when he rides into battle, that he left the brother of his heart behind him, to die beneath the swords of yonder Danish dogs."

"The best man should be saved," rejoined Don-

ogh; "an' there is none like you to make our comrades laugh around the forest fire, nor a man like you on the tundherin' field o' battle."

"Take my horse," said Theige. "Her hoofs are swift as the winds on Corrin Thierna; an' she will bear you away, like a flash o' lightnin', to Rockforest, safe an' sound."

"By the sowl o' the mother that bore me!" answered Donogh, "but I'd rather die a thousand deaths than do a mane act like that. Away with you, man, afore it is too late; an' lave me to my doom. What is it to die, when one does it like a brave man?"

"Look!" said Theige, as they still spurred along, "look behind at that thrumpeter on his white horse! See! he's a quarter of a mile afore his comrades, an' the same from us. He'll soon be up with us, if he goes at that rate. By the morthial! but that's a brave horse, an' I'll have him. An' now, Donogh, look at this," he continued, as he rode close up to the side of his brother, with his naked *skean*, or dagger, in his hand. "By this *skean*, if you don't take my mare, I'll plunge it through your heart; for I'd rather you'd die by my hand than be hanged like a dog when the throopers come up an' surround you. Now, leap behind me on the saddle, for we cannot lose time; an' I'll scramble into your saddle from this. There,—that's it," continued he, as Donogh, aware that further parley was useless, sprang behind him on the brave mare. "Now for a

spring in airnest!" And, with a bound like that of a wild cat, he threw himself on Donogh's lame horse. "Hurra!" he cried, "off with you, an' watch back from the high grounds how I'll dale with the man o' the white horse."

At this time they were on a height over a broad, flat valley. Away went Donogh at a hard gallop, and soon left his brother behind; who, however, went on in his track down the smooth declivity, as fast as the lame horse could carry him. As he left the descent, and was riding out into the flat bosom of the valley, the poor horse, weak from exertion and loss of blood, stumbled and fell beneath his rider at the crossing of a little stream. Just as Theige had extricated himself from the fallen steed, he heard a wild and exulting shout behind him; and, on looking back, beheld the trumpeter coming at a furious pace down the declivity, and calling out to him at the same time, with various choice execrations in Dutch and Danish, to stand and yield himself prisoner. Theige, however, neither caring for nor understanding the polite invitation, shook his sword at the trumpeter, and dashed over the soft sward of the valley in the direction of his brother. On came the trumpeter, closer and closer to him whom he considered but a helpless and defenceless fugitive; but, if he could only have seen the fierce and steady eye cast back at him occasionally by the Rapparee, he would have been far more cautious in his movements. As he came up, he delivered his most

tremendous and scientific cut at the head of the Rapparee, intending to sheer it off at one blow; but Theige, stooping almost to the ground at the same instant, allowed the sword to pass harmlessly over him, and, before the trumpeter could turn, was up with a wild and agile bound behind him on the white horse.

“An’ now, you murthurin’ dog!” he cried, as he clasped the luckless trumpeter around the body with his left hand, and flourished his long *skean* in his right, “did you ever feel the firm grip of a man before? You sack o’ wind, you ’ll never more blow the chargin’ blast on a trumpet. Take that!” And, at the word, the body of the trumpeter, pierced through and through by the long *skean*, fell on the boggy sward. At the same moment the first troop of the pursuers appeared on the height overhead, and, seeing the fate of their comrade, dashed headlong downward with a revengeful cry.

“Hurra!” shouted Theige, as he crept into the high-peaked saddle of the terrified horse, and urged him, like the wind, across the valley. “Here they come, the bloody hounds! but the first man that laves his ranks an’ comes up, he ’ll get a sore blow to reward him for his run!”

Away along the valley, over the opposite height, and down into the scattered forest by the river shore. Here Theige, feeling himself more secure, reined in his horse to a leisurely canter, intending to gain a ford farther down the river, where his brother would

be likely to cross, and await him on the farther side. On gaining the summit of a small, bare height, he could see behind him the scattered array of the troopers coming along at the same furious gallop, their armor and other accoutrements glittering in the sun, and their plumes glancing hither and thither with picturesque effect through green glade and hollow. Here Theige paused a moment to take a better survey of his pursuers. Far before the rest, two officers spurred along, one behind the other, down the bosom of a narrow valley that led by the height on which he rested his horse.

"'Tis the ould Gray Captain an' his brother," muttered Theige: "the man that hanged Guilelmis the Poet, an' burned the villages o' the west; the man that stabbed the priest beneath the Blossom Gate in Kilmallock; an' the very man that gave me this slash of his sabre on the head in the battle on the Inch o' Mallow. By the blessed Tree of Gorm, but I'll pay him back now or never!" And with that he gave his steed the spur, and galloped down at the opposite side of the hillock. Turning to the right, he descended into the valley at its lower extremity, and there reined up his steed once more, at the corner of a thick grove, by which he knew the two officers would pass.

In a few moments the Gray Captain clattered down the stony bridle-way, and out beyond the corner of the grove, without noticing the white horse on which Theige sat as far in as possible among the trees.

"I 'm sure of him, the morthial ould fiend!" said Theige to himself, "but I must wait an' have the brother along with him. An' here he comes!" he continued, as he wheeled round his horse, and pointed his long pistol through a broken space among the trees at the head of the Gray Captain's brother, who came thundering down with reckless speed by the side of the wood.

"There goes one!" exclaimed Theige fiercely, as he fired his pistol; and down went the officer, shot through the brain, with a loud crash and clang on the rugged and broken way, his steed, with a shrill neigh of terror, clattering down the valley, and making his way at length fast and far down the scattered woods by the Blackwater side.

"Now for the bravest an' wickedest man o' them all!" exclaimed Theige, as he gave his horse the spur. The Gray Captain at the same moment wheeled round his horse, and rushed up the bridle-path to meet him. As the two came near, the Captain, swerving his horse with a quick movement to the left, gave a back-handed slash of his sabre to Theige, which sheared off the crown-spike of his helmet, and went very near bringing him to the earth.

"A brave blow!" growled Theige between his clenched teeth, as he recovered himself, and, turning round his horse, trotted up warily to the spot where his foe stood on his guard awaiting him. But the Gray Captain's scientific and too systematic guards,

cuts, and parries proved now but of little avail against the quick and determined onset of the Rapparee; and he fell, just at the moment that his troop entered the topmost opening of the valley, and were rushing down to his assistance.

"By my sword!" said Theige, as he seized the bridle of his dead foeman's horse and spurred away, "but, man after man, if they come on this way, I'd have the horses of the whole troop before night." He now put the two horses to their utmost speed, and soon distanced his pursuers. On turning out beyond a grove, by the river-side, he suddenly came upon his brother, Donogh, who stood quietly awaiting him, after capturing the horse that had borne the Gray Captain's brother.

"I towld you I'd come safe, Donogh," said Theige, as they galloped off; "an' by the sowl o' King Brian! but the next time we go to Mallow, we'll bring away with us the nate brass cannon that the ould Skavinger took from MacDonogh's throops in the battle on the Inch."

On and on they spurred at a steady gallop till they found themselves far beyond pursuit, and at length, crossing a lonely ford of the Blackwater, regained their inaccessible haunt among the mountains, where that night Theige O'Cooney sang "Moll Roone" to his admiring companions, and to his own heart's content, beside his merry Rapparee camp-fire.



THE WHITETHORN TREE.

A LEGEND OF KILCOLMAN CASTLE.

CHAPTER I.

They washed the blood, with many a tear,
From dint of dart and arrow,
And buried him near the waters clear
Of the brook of Alpuxarra.

SPANISH BALLAD.

THE principal boundary between the counties of Cork and Limerick is that abrupt and boggy range called by Spenser the Mountains of Mole, but in the Irish denominated Sliabh Bally-houra, or the mountains of the dangerous ballaghs, or passes. To the west and south of this range, over many a broad plain and undulating valley, once spread the wild and romantic Forest of Kilmore. In the days of Elizabeth, and for nearly a century after, this forest sent out many off-shoots into the neighboring baronies. One of the most considerable of these branches, commencing near Buttevant, swept round the southern declivity of

the Ballyhouras, until at length it formed a junction with the great and intricate woody fastness of Aberlow, at the base of the Gaulty Mountains. Through it ran the beautiful Mulla, — now called Aubeg, — a short distance from which, on the shore of Lough Ullair, or the Eagle's Lake, rose up the battlements of Kilcolman Castle, once the residence of the immortal Spenser. This castle anciently belonged to the Earls of Desmond; but in July, 1586, it was granted by the crown to Spenser, together with about three thousand acres of the surrounding country. Here Spenser wrote his "Faërie Queen;" here —

"He sat, as was his trade,
Under the foot of Mole, that mountain hoar,
Keeping his sheep beneath the coolly shade
Of the green alders by the Mulla's shore, —

when the "Shepherd of the Ocean," Sir Walter Raleigh, visited him; and here he remained until the October of 1598, when the Desmond Insurrection broke out, and the castle was taken and burnt by the exasperated Irish. An infant son of his was burnt to death in the flames; and Spenser himself, together with his wife and two other sons, narrowly escaped sharing the same fate, and fled to England, where, on the 16th of January, 1599, he died at Westminster, London. The castle is now a mere ruin; but from the distance at which it can be seen, and its charming situation on a green knoll above

the lake, it still forms a very picturesque and interesting feature in the landscape.

It was a calm autumn evening, during the great insurrection which commenced in the year 1641. The waterfowl were quietly swimming on Lough Ullair; and the rich sunbeams were bathing the castle in their mellow light, and showing distinctly out the black, stern traces of the fire which loosened and disfigured its walls nearly half a century before. Outside the castle all was brightness, life, and beauty; but inside, darkness and decay made their dwelling throughout all the deserted chambers except one, whose gloom was dispelled by a merry little charcoal fire, which burned like a luminous point on the huge fireplace. Two figures sat on a stone bench beside that fire: one, a tall, dark-complexioned woman, advanced in years; the other, a young and handsome girl. The countenance of the latter showed the traces of recent weeping, but seemed beautiful even in its sorrow; and its effect was brightened by the tresses of rich, amber-colored hair which fell in bright masses upon her shoulders, harmonizing sweetly with the graceful folds of her dress, as she sat turned towards her companion, who was in the act of addressing her.

“You’ll not have him, you say. • You’ll never more meet a truer or braver man. If you saw him, as I did, in battle, when he was surrounded near Glanore, an’ how gallantly he broke through that press o’ men, you’d change your mind soon an’ suddint.”

"I cannot change my mind," answered the young girl: "my mind an' heart are made up, an' true to another since I was a child; an' death itself cannot make me break the faith I plighted."

"Well, I know him too. But you see by this that you can never be his wife, for you'll never see his face more. Take the man that suffered for you, an' that got himself hunted, like a wild baste, through the mountains for your sake. If you don't, you'll have his etarnil revenge on you, an' mine too, — an' you know me well by this; an' you must choose between bein' his wife, an' going into the arms o' the Black Captain."

"The Black Captain cannot be worse than your black brother. I'll meet the fate that God wills me, an' still be true to the man I love. Death will soon end my misery, if it comes to the worst."

At this moment a step was heard descending the spiral stair that led to the apartments above. The old creaking door opened, and the Black Captain himself stood before them. He was a man past the meridian of life, of an exceedingly dark complexion, and wearing the high hat, sober-colored cloak, and large, plain, iron-hilted sword, of a Puritan.

"Hast thou told her," he said, addressing the elder female, "of the blissful life she is to lead with a warrior from among God's chosen? Methinks thou must have a most persuasive tongue; for Reuben Sadface, my trusty man, knows by this the sore persuasion that dwells in thy clenched hands and finger-nails."

"I've towld her all," answered the woman, sullenly, "an' she's the same still. Ask herself."

"I may not beatify my soul with such loving dalliance this eventide. A blessed and holy call, a war-call, has taken possession of my spirit for the moment. Even as Saul was commanded to slay the idolatrous nations, so am I chosen to purge by the agency of fire and steel the western valleys of their heathenish progeny; and I must be gone. When the sword of the Lord shall have fallen upon those children of Baal, I shall return to tell what I have left unsaid to this, — this branch rescued from the burning, — this most fortunate of maidens."

"Alice O'Brien," said the woman bitterly, when the Black Captain had left them, "answer me this. Do you think I coaxed you up, an' thrated you like as if you wor' my own sisther, to be bate an' baffled by you this way? Maybe you won't be the show for all Murrogh an' Theothawn's* army, when the Black Captain has you in his crooks! Maybe then you'll wish to be back with me, and that you had made up your mind to have my brave brother Theige, my fine and cunnin' damsel!"

"I answer once more," said Alice, "that I'll have neither the Black Captain nor your brother Theige: I'll die first. I put my trust in God; an' perhaps my brother Moran an' his comrade, John Mac-Sheehy, may come soon enough with their horsemen, an' set me free."

* Murrogh the Burner, — the Earl of Inchiquin.

“Your brother Moran an’ your sweetheart John have enough to do to keep their own carkisses safe, without mindin’ what’ll become o’ the likes o’ you. But never mind. Wait, an’ we’ll see what’ll come o’ this to-morrow.”

A few hours after the departure of the Black Captain that evening, the setting sun was darting his red beams through the glades of the scattered forest by the banks of the beautiful Ounanar, a few miles eastward of Kilcolman Castle. The Ounanar is a wild stream, rising far up in the Ballyhoura Mountains, amid the bogs beyond Kilcolman, and flowing into the Mulla a short distance below Doneraile. In one of the most solitary glades beside the stream, the sunbeams were reflected by some not very unfrequent objects in those dreadful times, namely, the morion and accoutrements of a dead young soldier. He lay upon his back, with his right hand grasping the empty scabbard of his sword, and his left thrown upward threateningly, as if, in his last moments, he had endeavored to menace death or some other unwelcome visitor from his side. His head, cleft by a great wound, lay heavily upon the blood-stained grass; and his morion, also cleft, had fallen off, part hidden in the grass, and the top, or spike, glittering in the sun. As he lay thus, a raven from a neighboring tree perched upon a fragment of rock near him, and for a few moments regarded him with a wary and inquisitive look; then, as if satisfied that there was

no danger, it half opened its wings, and, hopping along the grass, alighted again upon the spike of the morion. It was, however, soon scared from its unsteady resting-place by a more rapacious banqueter. A huge wolf rushed forth from the copse, and, with a voracious whine, laid its foremost paws upon the iron-clad but pulseless breast of the young man. Its long white teeth ground against the edge of his steel breastplate, its red eyes glared with féroocious satisfaction at the prospect of its savage meal, when it was in its turn also interrupted, but in a more fatal manner. A shot rang up from the river bank; and the wolf, wounded through the heart, fell backward, with claws and teeth tearing in its mortal agony a huge frieze cloak, or cape, which lay over the shoulders of the dead soldier. Before the echoes of the shot had died along the hollow banks of the stream, a horseman rode swiftly up the glade, and, leaping from his steed, plunged his sword through the body of the expiring wolf.

The horseman was attired like the young soldier, whose body he had thus so opportunely rescued. On his head he wore a helmet, or morion, without a plume, but with a sharp steel spike projecting straight upwards from its crown. Over his shoulders, and reaching beyond his hips, hung a brown frieze cape, fastened at the throat by a silver clasp, and open somewhat in front, showing underneath a bright steel back-and-breast, or corselet. His

trousers were colored like the cape and of the same material, the legs falling below into a pair of long, unpolished boots which reached to his knees, with their formidable spurs, giving him the air of one by whom the saddle was very seldom abandoned for a more quiet seat. From a belt around his waist, along with the usual skean, or dagger, hung the scabbard of his sword; and in his right hand he grasped the naked blade, while in his left he held the small musketoon which he had just discharged with so true an aim. He was young, somewhat above the middle height, and his bronzed, determined face and fearless eye showed that he had seen both hardships and dangers, and was ready to brave them again without concern.

He advanced now, and stooped down, examining the features of the fallen youth. "Ha, Moran!" he exclaimed, suddenly, "great God, how is this?" Then falling on his knees beside the body, he continued, "O Moran! my only friend, and the brother of my lost Alice, little I expected we'd meet thus! Little did I think that 'twas your dead body I was saving from the jaws of the wild dog of the hills! The battles are coming again, and the gallant gathering is by the walls of Castle na Doon; but who will ride beside me like Moran O'Brien?"

He started to his feet as if the thought maddened him, and commenced striding wildly up and down the glade.

"Poor Ellen Roche too, who loved him so well!

— little her light heart dreams of this, — the black and woful news I'll have to tell her at the dance to-morrow !”

He once more approached the body, and, examining it more minutely, found a bullet-wound in the throat, which, with the severed helmet and the long gash upon the head, made him suspect that the unfortunate young soldier had come by his death unfairly. Then, as if his suspicions had lighted upon some individual, and that he determined to wreak immediate vengeance, he took the body in his arms, and deposited it in a deep, narrow rent between two rocks near the stream ; and covering it with some leafy boughs, and a few long stone flags, in order to preserve it from the wolves, at that period so numerous in the country, he muttered sorrowfully a few prayers, mounted his steed, and departed.

After crossing the river, and riding along its eastern shore somewhat more than a mile, he turned his horse's head towards the southern flank of a steep mountain, strewn with great bowlders of rock, which, as the twilight now darkened over the hills to help the illusion, rose up from the solitary heath, bare and spectral, like the deserted and melancholy ruins of an ancient city. A number of these lay congregated in an irregular ridge near the summit ; and here the young horseman alighted, and, leading his steed noiselessly along the soft turf, stood at length beside a huge, broad rock, so flat and

low that it scarcely reached above the brushwood and long heath that grēw around. Underneath it, at one side, there was a small entrance, or opening, through which a confused jumble of voices now fell upon the horseman's ear; while a clear stream of light also shot forth, and brightened the scarred and weather-beaten face of a crag that rose hard by. Peering cautiously through another and a smaller chink, he beheld, what he indeed sought for, a group inside; the individuals of which corresponded exactly in appearance with the strange place they had chosen for their habitation.

In the corner of a small apartment irregularly formed by a rent in the crag, and having for its roof the lower surface of the flat rock mentioned above, sat before a bright fire of blazing bog-deal three figures, as different in appearance from each other as could be consistent with the fact that each formed a member of the great human family. He who sat between the other two was a man in the prime of life and of gigantic stature; his long, matted beard and hair falling almost on his breast and shoulders, and a reddish cap, with a sprig of blossomed whitethorn for a plume, set somewhat cavalierly, but fiercely, on his head. His prominent, beard-covered chin, and thin, beaked nose, gave to his wild physiognomy a sinister expression, which was increased by a pair of gloomy eyes bent sternly on the person at his right, whom he was in the act of addressing. He was enveloped in a soiled

scarlet cloak, which lay closely round his upright figure, and fell in folds behind him upon the block of stone on which he sat; showing a pair of long, frieze-clad legs, and feet encased in great brogues, with low heels, made so in order not to impede his progress over the quagmires and bogs of which he was so often a denizen. Such was the figure of Theige Folling Dearg, or Timothy of the Red Cloak, — the dweller by the Fairy Thorn-tree of Glanamar. He to the right, to whom Theige of the Red Cloak gave in his conversation the title of Theige Cu Allee, or Theige the Wolf, had full and ample claims, in appearance at least, to that sylvan cognomen. He was of dwarfish height, but, at the same time, so brawny and broad-shouldered as to have, as he sat with his short legs stretched out and hidden among some green heath, the appearance of a giant ogre, sunk to his middle in the earth. His mouth, the most prominent part of his features, was garnished with an irregular set of large teeth, which gave him, when he either laughed or sneered, some resemblance to a snarling wolf. He wore a cap and loose frieze coat, open in front, and showing a broad, hairy chest, not unused, if one could judge from the wild expression of the face, to heave with many a storm of vindictive passion. Their comrade was, in form certainly, a direct opposite to both. His features were regular and handsome; he appeared, as he sat, a little below the middle size, and very slenderly formed; but there was a wiriness about

his whole frame, and something in his dark, sagacious eye, that told him no mean antagonist, with that long skean he wore at his side, in a single encounter or in the confusion of a battle. His clothes fitted better than Cu Allee's, but were of the same material. He answered his companions with the utmost self-complacency, when they addressed him in their discourse by the enviable title of Theige na Meerval, or Timothy of the Wonders, — a name to which he had, at the moment, strong claims, from the miraculous facility with which he disposed of some large fragments of beef he had boiled upon the bog-deal embers. Various instruments of warfare were strewn around them, demonstrating, that, in all circumstances excepting that of a blockade, the citadel could be held for a long time and against considerable odds. They appeared to be engaged in some very interesting conversation.

"For hursel," said he of the Red Cloak, "hur would rather see the Sassenachs with their spurs in their horses' flanks, an' their soords in their hands, nor to see them slinking behind stone garrisons, like foxes in the crags of Ullair."

"Yes," said Cu Allee, in his native tongue, "wherever the Sassenach goes, there is rich booty; and, for me, there was once sweeter booty, — plenty of revenge."

"Hur often heerd Cu Allee whisperin' an' cuggerin', in hur sleep an' in hur wake, about that revenge, but never heerd how 'twas got."

"'Twas got," said the Man of Wonders, pointing to a suspicious-looking bundle of twisted osiers by the side of Cu Allee, "'twas got, I'm sartin, in the ould way, by the gad an' the cross-sticks."

"'Twas got," exclaimed Cu Allee fiercely, "on the day that Murrogh an' Theothawn's captain, with his guard about him, gave into my hands Rory Finn, the black and cursed ruiner of my young sister. The clink of the Sassenach's gold was sweet; but far sweeter was Rory's groan to my ears, when he knew his time was come. We placed the cross-sticks beneath the walls of Kilcolman; and I—I faced Black Rory towards the darkened home and the churchyard where she slept near, and sent him, for good or for bad, to follow her to his last account. Many is the gad I twisted about the neck of Gael and Sassenach; but the one that finished my mortal foe, Rory Finn,—and I have it here beside me,—was the most precions of all."

"Hurself would take it by the strong hand an' the sharp soord, as hur did last night," rejoined Folling Dearn.

"Or," said the Man of Wonders, holding out his long, bright skean in his hand, "or by manes o' this, as a sartin person did not long ago in Kilkenny. Listen; for it is one o' the charmin' things that brought me into the sarvice o' the prayer-canthers,—the bloody, timber-faced Parliaminthers. I was standin' in a sthreet in Kilkenny, before the doore of a big forge where the smiths from home an' from

furrin parts wor hammerin' an' sledgin' away at soords an' pikes an' armor an' skeans, the dead brother o' this I hould in my hand. I was standin', doin' a few tricks o' sleight-o'-hand, an' givin' a few summersets in the way o' my business; an' the smiths, with their black faces an' brawny arms, wor beginnin' to throw away their hammiers an' sledges, an' come to the doores an' windows, lookin' at me, when who should come along at the other side o' the street but a grand bishop, or cardinal, with five or six big fellows, like sogers, walkin', some behind him an' some before, with drawn soords in their hands. He looks at the smiths all idle, an' the arms wantin' so much for the war; an' he looks at me playin' my capers in the street. He said somthin' to the men in a furrin language; an' three o' them made over to me, an' laid houl't o' me worse than if I was caught in a big vise in one o' the forges, an' then banged and bate me with their sword handles off o' the street. I said nothin', but followed them for a while, till the man that laid houl't on me first was sent on a message beyond one o' the gates o' the town-wall. I waited in the porch for the bloody villain; an', when he was comin' past me, I gave this sportin' skean o' mine a nate night's lodgin' in his side, an' fled for my life, an' won the race like a man."

One part of this most edifying conversation, namely, Folling Dearg's allusion to his deed of the preceding night, interested the listener outside not

a little, wanting, as he did, to find some clue to the death of his comrade ; but it seemed, on the present occasion, he had business of even more importance to himself to transact with these worthies ; so, making a slight noise as a signal of his approach, he walked round to the large aperture in order to enter. Na Meerval, when they heard the sound inside, crept out with the agility of a weasel, through the small chink ; so, when the young horseman entered, he was somewhat surprised at finding only two inside.

“I thought,” said he to Folling Dearn, the moment he had entered, “that Na Meerval sat by your side now.”

“Na Meerval stands by your side,” answered Folling Dearn, eyeing the visitor darkly.

That lively personage, having entered at the large aperture as stealthily as he before made his exit, stood close at the side of the horseman.

“Theige Na Meerval is here,” said he. “When he found the fern-seed by the Robber’s Well, the Shee Geeha became his comrade ; for he could make himself be seen or not be seen, whenever he took it into his head. Shane na Shrad knew this before, I think.”

Shane na Shrad, or John of the Bridle, — a name, by the way, which the young soldier had got in consequence of his feats of horsemanship, — was too sharp-witted to be deceived so readily.

"Shane na Shrad knows," he said, "that there is a chink, besides the door, in this cavern."

"Fwhat does hur come for now?" queried Folling Dearg, who, although he pretty well knew the purport of the visit, wanted to obtain some information from John of the Bridle. "To-morrow is hur great day by the walls of Caishlean na Doon; but Theige Folling Dearg knows, that, like a flock of wild ducks from the springs, the Gael will be scatthered soon by Murrogh of the Burnings and his brave Sassenachs."

"Murrogh and his starved wolves are not likely to do so at present," said John of the Bridle. "Yon, I know, and your two comrades, are on the scent for news, to be paid for it by the gold of Black Murrogh of Inchiquin. We keep it no secret that before long we'll be passing the Bridge of Done-raile; and you and its defenders may dream of what's to follow, while our troopers are dancing with the girls for a day or two beside the green woods of Castle na Doon."

"In my-mind," said Na Meerval, "some o' them will caper a quarer dance in a short time, undher a kind o' three where they'll have only the wind for a floor, an' Cu Allee's throe-lover's knot about their necks."

Cu Allee, although he principally exercised his genius in the enviable profession of a skibbioch, or hangman, never relished a jibe, however, on that score.

"Cu Allee's knot," he exclaimed, "was once round your neck; and, only he let you practise your sleight-of-hand upon it, you'd dance the skibbioch's jig. But the next time!"

"No more of this," said John of the Bridle. "I came," he continued, addressing Folling Dearg, "that you may now redeem the promise you gave me when we last met among the mountains. Where is Alice O'Brien?"

Folling Dearg's face darkened as he spoke. "Hur has searched hill-side an' coom an' town an' forest since for a colleen with a thrue heart, like the one you towld hur of, but never found one since. Maybe the Black Sassenach captain could tell all about hur."

"Is this, then," said the horseman, "the way you pay me for giving you your life when the troopers were about cutting you in pieces, and Moran O'Brien standing with his skean at your throat?"

Folling Dearg laid his hand on his skean, as if to guard against the consequences of what he was about to say. "Iss, maybe Moran O'Brien knows by this what it is to put a skean to a brave man's throat, an' threaten him with death. An' Alice, hur is false to Shane na Shrad as well as to—to Folling Dearg; an'," he continued, with a deadly and vindictive sneer upon his lip, "hur can now smile upon the Black Captain in the camp-tents o' Murrogh the Burner."

"Lying villain," exclaimed the horseman, "here

is payment for your treachery." And, suddenly drawing out his sword, he struck Folling Dearg with its pommel upon the forehead. Folling Dearg reeled, and fell among the heath in the corner of the cavern. But, recovering in a moment, he sprang to his feet with the fury and agility of a panther, and, seizing a long sword that lay against the wall beside him, struck at the horseman a blow that would have gone, spite of guard and helmet, to his brain, had not the blade, as it swang upwards, come against the low roof of the cave, and shattered into a hundred fragments. At this moment, and while both were preparing to dash again at each other, the two hopeful spectators of the encounter rushed between them.

"We'll have no more fightin' to-night," said the Man of Wonders: "Shane na Shrad saved Cu Allee's life, an', afther that, Cu Allee saved my life; so 'tis Shane I must thank that all the ravens in the country haven't me in their hungry craws at present. So we'll stand to Shane na Shrad this time, an' have no bloodshed to-night in our nate an' peaceful little castle."

"Stand to hur, then," said Folling Dearg; and, with that, he sprung, skean in hand, at the horseman. But he missed his aim; for, at the same moment, Cu Allee threw his long arms around his knees, and dragged him by main force to the other corner of the cave, where, with his face streaming blood, he stood struggling and glaring like a wounded wolf upon his antagonist.

“Leave us,” cried Cu Allee, his wrath kindling with his exertions, “leave us, I say, or curp an’ dhoul! there will be soon blood enough upon this floor.”

“I go, then,” said the horseman, perhaps not depending on the sincerity of their promise to stand to him in the quarrel; “but remember, Folling Dearg, that Shane na Shrad’s vow of vengeance was never made in vain.” And, with that, he departed from the cavern, mounted his steed, and left the trio to their pleasant converse inside.

The moon had now risen over the hills, and gave him light as he pursued his way through a pass on the eastern flank of the mountain he was just about to ascend. At the furthest extremity of the pass he reined in his horse for a time, to gaze on a scene that opened on his view. Beneath him, in the calm moonlight, and checkered with the remains of an ancient forest, lay the undulating and romantic valley of Cloghanofy, with the dark fort of Castle na Doon rising on a height at one side; and the Oun na Geerit, or River of the Champion, after descending the mountain range opposite the castle, winding in many a silver coil through the low, marshy grounds and indistinct woodlands. Further on, a vista opened between a wood-clad hill on one side, and the ruin-crowned height of Ardpatrik on the other; showing the level plain of Limerick veiled in a light blue mist, through which river and height and castle peered out, like the indistinct and

varying panorama of a dream. But what most attracted the attention of the young soldier was a number of fires which glimmered redly upon the lawn that spread before the dark castle beneath him. They were the watch-fires of the cavalry who made their camp here, waiting to join Lord Castlehaven, who was marching at this time at the head of a well-appointed Irish army from the county of Tipperary. John of the Bridle, after descending from the pass, entered a small but neatly-kept cottage, at the end of the straggling village of Fannys-town. His mother, a light-haired, good-humored looking matron, the daughter of an English settler, stood up as he entered; and, expressing her gladness at his safe return, told a little boy, who sat luxuriously in the corner by the fire, to see after her son's horse.

"Wisha!" said the urchin, with a groan of tribulation, as he went out, "'tis horses an' horses forever. I never stopt all day but houldin' horses for them father-long-legs o' cavalthry, an' now I must be at it agin. I liked their prancin' an' gambadin' first well enough, but afther to-day my likin' for it is spilt entirely."

The young soldier sat ruefully by the fire; and, turning to his mother, told her of the failure of his search for Alice O'Brien, and of the death of her brother Moran. These were times when death was of but small account in the mind of either man or woman; and John's mother was more apprehen-

sive for the safety of her son than shocked or frightened at the death of his comrade.

"I would wish, John," she said, "that you had long ago given up your mad ideas about that silly wench, Alice. Was it not better that you had taken my advice on the matter, when you could mate better with Amy, Neighbor Holton's daughter?"

"No, mother," said John: "I have the hot Irish blood of my father running in my veins, and I will have full vengeance for the death of my comrade. I have obeyed you in every thing else; but ask me not to give up Alice, for it is useless. To-morrow will, I hope, bring me some news of her fate."

The morrow was shining in all the glory of summer upon the woody dells of Fannystown, and the gray hills that towered above them; but with the new day and its many incidents it is better to commence a new chapter.

CHAPTER II

Until yellow Autumn shall usher the Pasehal day,
And Patriek's gay festival come in its train alway;
Until through my coffin the blossoming boughs shall grow,
My love on another I'll never in life bestow.

E. WALSH.

FANNYSTOWN was at this time what was called a protected village; that is, the soldiers of the Government, though often resting there, were not

permitted to plunder its inhabitants. It would, however, probably have been plundered and destroyed, had it not been such a convenient resting and camping place, situated as it was in the most dangerous, yet most easily defended, pass between the plains of Cork and Limerick. It consisted of a long line of mud-built houses at one side of the public way; lowly dwellings indeed, but at the same time so thickly planted that it gave one the notion, when on some important day the inhabitants were astir, of a row of beehives, with all their busy denizens moving to and fro at the commencement of their morning avocations. Behind the village, upon a height, stood the mansion of Sir John Ponsonby, looking down upon the bright waters of the Oun na Geerait, — a stream rising in a deep gorge between the mountains, and dancing by many a wild dell and picturesque hollow until it lost its waters in the rapid Funcheon. The square, loop-holed turrets at the corners of the mansion showed that its owner had not neglected the defence wanted so much in those stormy times; but the rows of bow-windows in the front, facing the stream, gave it a gay appearance, which contrasted strangely with the aspect of its stern neighbor at the other side of the valley, — the compact Castle of the Fort; or, as it was named by the surrounding people, Caishlan na Doon. This was one of those tall, square keeps, so many of which still frown from their rocky sites along the neighboring

plain ; telling in their decay, with as much certainty as the pen of the historian, of the troublous times in which they were built, and the domestic habits of the warring races to whom they owed their foundations. It is now considerably increased in dimensions by additions suited to the present day, and has rather a modernized appearance ; but part of the original building still remains. At the time of the following events, it was inhabited by Sir Edward Fitzharris, a Catholic gentleman, who, like his neighbor, Sir John Ponsonby, favored the principles of the Confederation of Kilkenny.

It was high noon when John of the Bridle dashed his horse across the stream, and rode up towards the camp upon the lawn before Castle na Doon.

“ Monom ! why is she so long, an’ the curnil axin for her ? ” said an old war-worn trooper, who stood guard at the entrance of the camp.

“ The news I have to tell him will be likely to set you and your comrades at work, Diarmid,” answered John of the Bridle. “ Here, Jemmy,” he continued, addressing a wild, elfish-looking little urchin, — the same who had seen to his horse’s comfort on the preceding night, — “ take this bridle, and hold my horse till I come out ; and, mind, no galloping this time, for, I fear, the poor fellow will get enough to-day.” Jemmy, whose gusto for horseflesh, notwithstanding his heart-rending complaints on the evening before, was increased with tenfold strength during the morning, took the bridle ; and scarcely

was the horseman out of sight behind the tents when he was up, like a cat, in the saddle, and careering with unheard-of speed over the lawn.

John of the Bridle entered the castle, and was led by another sentinel up a dark, winding stair into a gloomy-looking chamber, where the colonel who commanded the cavalry, with a few officers, sat planning busily their future movements.

"The general will be here with the whole army in a few days," said the colonel: "and, on the faith of a soldier! I wish we may see him sooner; for I like not sitting, like a hermit, here when there is so much to be done for our brave fellows. Ha!" continued he, turning to John, as he entered, "here comes our worthy scout; perchance he may inform us how the Burner and his canting vagabonds are preparing for our onslaught. The passes towards St. Leger's den are free for the expedition on to-morrow, young man?"

"The passes are clear enough, colonel; but, as I rode yesterday through the forest by Doneraile, a shot from a falconet was near ending my outriding. There are three more on the battlements of St. Leger's Castle, and the walls are thronged with men."

"I trust," rejoined the colonel, "to the broad mouths of our long field-pieces to silence them; but God knows how we shall circumvent those rieving villians who yet hang on our march. Hast thou seen that murdering troop that burned the two western hamlets?"

"No, colonel: they are fled towards the Kerry border. Another small troop I saw coming out from Doneraile, and preparing to scour the hills; but they'll meet but a sorry welcome from the wild horsemen of Ballyhoura."

The colonel here took a sealed packet from the table, and put it into the hands of the young horseman. "Thy services," he said, "will merit the reward thou seekest. Deliver this safely to the Governor of Kilmallock, and thou shalt have thy commission as captain of thy troop, and that speedily. I know of no other," said he, addressing the officers, as John of the Bridle was led down stairs by the sentinel, — "I know of none who so marvellously finds his way through those cursed bogs and scroggy passes, and who hath such a goodly share of true courage, as that young man."

As John turned his horse in the direction of Kilmallock, he thought of the events of the preceding day, and how Ellen Roche would bear the news of her lover's death. "But I cannot be at the dance," he said, giving his horse the spur, "if I don't make my way quicker than this."

At the back of Fannystown village was a green in a hollow, through the midst of which ran the Ounna Geerait, after emerging from a narrow, tangled glen at the foot of the mountain. The slope around it was clothed with scattered brushwood; and, where it lost itself in the level space at one side, rose an aged and giant elm-tree, around the trunk of which

the villagers, with some of the horsemen from the camp, were thronging to hear the strains of a gray-haired piper, who talked and laughed among them as merrily as if he was in the very heyday of his youth. Around him were gathered the girls and young men of the village, with an occasional trooper, looking for partners, and arranging themselves in two rows facing each other, in order to commence the *Rinkefodha*, or long dance, a figure much resembling the contra-dances of the present day: while outside and half surrounding the group sat the more aged dwellers of the hamlet; and beyond, upon the green, stood the children in little groups, looking with gleeful and expectant faces for the commencement of the amusements. The long dance was ended, and many an intricate and merry measure danced afterwards by separate groups of four each: at length, a weariness seemed to fall upon them, and they sat around the piper, entreating him to play some of those slow, wild tunes so peculiar to the country. Among the supplicants for the tune was a dark-eyed young girl, who accompanied her request with so sweet a smile that the old man commenced at once tuning his pipes, with a variety of running tones, which, to the children at least, proved precursors of the most delicious and enchanting melody. This young maiden was Ellen Roche, the betrothed of Moran O'Brien; but who little knew, amid the gladness that reigned around her, of the miseries awaiting her, and of the sad doom of her-lover. Her black hair fell

in shining masses upon her pretty shoulders, setting off a light and graceful figure, and a sweet face, to which the brilliant and dark eyes gave an expression at once animated and lovely.

“Wirrasthru!” said the piper: “my ould fingers are almost as stiff as that long soord o’ Jack Flanagan’s there. But every thing’s gettin stiff, as dhrunken Bill Breen said, when his wife refused to swally a whole barreelful of ale in one dhrink. Well, I had my day out o’ the world at any rate.” And, so saying, he struck up an ancient Irish march, or war-tune, with such effect that the eyes of the young stripplings around him began to sparkle, and even the hands of the wild troopers began to move instinctively towards their sword-hilts; so easily were the rugged and simple natures of those times and scenes moved and excited by the power of the musician.

“Come, an’ sit down here by my side, my sweet flower,” said he, addressing Ellen Roche, when the war-tune was ended. “Come, an’ I’ll play up your favorite tune; an’ — whisht, ye rantin’ divils! — an’ you’ll sing the ould song I larned you long ago, about the young throoper, — a nater fellow than any o’ ye’ll ever be anyhow, ye tarin’ thieves,” he continued, turning to the horsemen. Ellen sat upon the bank beside him; and, when the talk was silenced, he commenced to play a singularly sweet old tune, which the young maiden accompanied in a soft and tender voice, with the words of an Irish ballad, of

which the following may be taken as a translation :—

“JOHNNY DUNLEA.

“ There’s a tree in the greenwood I love best of all,—
It stands by the side of Easmor’s haunted fall, —
For there, while the sunset fell bright far away,
Last I met ’neath its branches my Johnny Dunlea.

Oh ! to see his fine form, as he rode down the hill,
While the red sunlight glowed on his helmet of steel,
With his broadsword and charger, so gallant and gay,
On that evening of woe for my Johnny Dunlea !

He stood by my side ; and the love-smile he wore
Still brightens my heart, tho’ ’twill beam never more.
’Twas to have but one farewell, then speed to the fray :
’Twas a farewell for ever, my Johnny Dunlea !

For the fierce Saxon soldiers lay hid in the dell,
And burst on our meeting with wild savage yell ;
But their dark leader’s life-blood I saw that sad day,
And it stained the good sword of my Johnny Dunlea.

My curse on the traitor ! my curse on the ball
That stretched my true love by Easmor’s haunted fall !
Oh ! the blood of his brave heart ebbed quickly away,
And he died in my arms there, my Johnny Dunlea ! ”

Alas ! little thought the fair singer at the moment, that her own was a fate like that of the poor maiden of the song. During the song, had any person looked behind where the branches of the elm-tree drooped against the slope, they might have seen a pair of bright, cunning eyes peering out between the

leaves of the copse at the person of the singer. There was an expression in those weasel eyes that boded no good to Ellen Roche: but the pair, bright and keen as they were, had not the fortune to belong to a weasel; they were the property of a handsome and nimble-looking little man, who lay upon his breast, gazing thus, but well concealed from the observation of the villagers. The moment the song was ended, and, while the attention of all was taken up in giving the due meed of applause, the little man swung himself cautiously into a projecting branch of the elm-tree; and moving noiselessly along the gnarled limbs, as if he had learned the method from a squirrel, he perched himself for a moment among the thick leaves upon another branch which drooped over the centre of the throng below. Suddenly he let himself drop into the midst of the circle; and, before any one knew how he had come there, he had performed half a dozen "summersets" upon the green.

"Theige na Meerval! Theige na Meerval!" cried the delighted children.

"Theige na Meerval himself!" exclaimed their elders. "Honom an' dhoul! but I believe he's after fallin' out o' the sky."

"Thundher-an-ages, no!" said a trooper. "Doesn't every mother's sowl o' ye know that he's invisible when he likes, an' can walk invisible into the centre o' people; an' wid one touch make himself be seen agin by every person, in one morthial minnit?"

“ I did fall out o’ the sky,” said the Man of Wonders, at the same time cutting a few capers that blended their surprise with immense merriment. “ Where is the use in me bein’ enchanted, if I cannot circumvint myself into a blast o’ wind when I likes ? ”

The strains of the poor piper were now neglected ; and all thronged around the showman, — for that was his particular and favorite profession, — and began to press still closer, with open mouths, and faces of wonder and expectancy. Na Meerval now took a strangely-made knife from his pocket, and commenced to show off some of his feats. Suddenly he stooped till his face almost touched the ground ; and, amidst innumerable “ Monoins ! ” “ Dhar Dias ! ” and “ Hiernas ! ” from the astonished bystanders, jerked himself up straight again, with the blade of the knife sticking upwards through his tongue. He now beckoned for more space ; and, when he found sufficient, he stooped forward with his hands resting on the ground, and, springing over, stood upon his feet again, holding the knife aloft in his hand.

“ Ha, ha ! ” he exclaimed, “ if all o’ ye used your knives that way, maybe ’tis little soft talk ye’d be able to give the girls afterwards. Did ye ever hear where I wint the first time I made myself invisible ? Divil a place would please me but Spain, to larn magic from an ould anshint thief, that was as great as two pickpockets with the Ould Oganach * himself. He could see me when no one else could ; an’ I stopt

* The Devil,

with him 'till the murtherin' ould thief turned me away out of invy, when he saw I was batin' out himself. Howsomdever, I'll show ye somethin' that he larned me." And, so saying, he raised his hand, and, apparently to his audience, struck himself lightly on the mouth. A volume of bluish smoke, accompanied with bright sparks, issued suddenly from between his open jaws; at the appearance of which the spectators, so delighted were they at the marvel, set up a wild shout of applause and wonder.

"There is one thing, howsomdever," said he again, "that every person bates me at, — gamin'." And walking to a smooth stone, which served for a seat, he drew from his pocket a dice-box, and laid it beside him. "Now," continued he, turning to the troopers, at the same time laying two silver coins upon the stone, "ye were paid not long ago, an' here is a flamin' fine time to make the forthin' of every livin' sowl among ye."

"I made my forthin' once in the sackin' of a town, an' lost agin every jingler of it in battle; an' now gamin' won't remake it for me," said a huge, stern-looking trooper, with the marks of a great sword-cut across his face.

"Well, purshuin' to me, do you hear that?" said a jolly, careless fellow, who was already seated by Na Meerval's side, with the dice-box rattling in his hand, and his stake down: "Mun Callaghan, that would sell himself to a certain curious gintleman undhernathe us, body an' bones an' sowl, for money, sayin'

now that there is no varthue in gamin'!" So saying, he threw and won. This good fortune made others eager for the play, till, after various games, most of the troopers found the few coins they possessed since the last pay-day comfortably transferred to the pockets of Na Meerval. He now turned to Mun Callaghan.

"You see I'm richer now than when I began. Come, an' larn the sweet an' inchantin' mysteries o' the dice-box. Play, man, play; an,' as you're so fond o' the money, maybe you'd win it all back again."

"I will not play," answered Mun, in an angry tone.

"Yerrah! man, can't you take one chance?" said his comrades. "The divil resave the much we're at a loss anyhow; for, like yourself, 'tis little we had to lose. Ructions to us, man! why don't you play?"

"Bekaise I have an' ould an' wake mother beyont the hills, wid no one to purtect her, an' who wants what I can give her out o' my pay, — not to have me lose id gamin'," answered Mun bitterly. This produced a laugh among the more careless of his comrades; and the Man of Wonders, emboldened by the merriment, overstepped seemingly his usual cautiousness.

"Yarrah!" said he, "maybe 'twas batin' you with a sthraw or a rish for your conthrairy doins your ould mother was that put that tattherin' glin of a wound acrass your face." The answer was a blow from the ponderous fist of Mun, which sent Na Meerval spin-

ning, like a cork, along the green. The blow, however, certainly stunned him somewhat less than he pretended.

“Oh!” said he, as if waking from a deadly swoon, and still lying extended on the grass, “I’m done in airnest at last, — kilt unnathrally. Here is my brain spinnin’ round an’ round, like a wheel-o’-forthin,’ — the rale sign o’ death. Oh!” And he sank apparently into a swoon again, while the villagers gathered round him in instant commiseration of his hard fate. “Is there any good Christhian,” he exelaimed, reviving onee more, — “is there any good an’ ehari-table Christhian that would lade me to their home till I die in pace? My brain! my brain! Lade me up to Moureen Roche’s, the ould widow o’ the hollow, where I often slept before. Is that Ellen Roche I see? Lade me, up a *colleen dhas*, ’till I die in pae.”

He now stood up, but tottered; and Ellen Roche, coming forward, caught him by the arm, and, assisted by one of the young men, began to lead him up to where her mother’s house stood in a lonely hollow some distance up the glen. After going a few perch-es, Na Meerval seemed to get somewhat stronger, and told the young man that he eould reach the house with the help of Ellen Roche. The young man, possessed altogether with the idea of his sweet-heart, whom he saw looking with a jealous eye after him, turned back willingly, just as Mun Callaghan, with many a reproach ringing in his ears, was stalk-

ing off towards the camp. The ineident was, however, soon forgotten in a short time, and the dance renewed as merrily as ever.

In the mean time Ellen Roche, with N^a Meerval behind her, led the way towards her home, 'till they reached a lonely spot where the path crossed the glen ; and here, instead of dying in peace as he promised, the Man of Wonders sprang at the unsuspecting girl, and, before she could scream for help, tied a kerchief round her face, which rendered her unable either to see, or call for assistance. He now gave a low whistle ; and, at the signal, his two comrades of the cave stepped out from a dark nook in the side of the glen. Ellen Roche, unlike the majority of heroines, did not faint at once, but, like the brave girl that she was, resisted to the utmost the efforts of the three, as they bore her through the forest towards the pass leading between the mountains, till at length, entirely exhausted, she sank into a passive kind of stupor, in which she continued until the kerchief was taken off her face.

On opening her eyes, she found herself in a narrow recess between two rocks, which, by way of rendering it habitable, was roofed with boughs of oak, and thatched over with bundles of heath and fern. It was situated on the side of a deep glen, through which the bright, bog-tinted stream rushed downward with a hollow murmur ; and its entrance opened towards a wide moor, whose undulating expanse stretched out, drear and lonely, until it termi-

nated in a low range of dark hills to the west. Outside the door of the hut, the eyes of the young girl fell upon two objects, each remarkable in its appearance, but, from the possession of very different qualities. One has been described before: it was no less than Cu Allee, standing guard at the entrance; and the other was the most beautiful whitethorn ever seen by human eyes, growing on the extremity of a green tongue of land at the opposite side of the glen. It shot up in a single stem to about seven feet from the ground, and then branched into three graceful arms, which extended themselves from side to side, in ramifications so singularly light and beautiful that the wild inhabitants of the mountains should not be deemed over-credulous for believing that the fairies trained its sprays, — upon which some white blossoms still lingered, — to assume those lovely forms; and that they made the little green around it one of their most favored retreats.

But, if Ellen Roche was surprised for an instant at the beauty of the whitethorn, it was with dismay and terror that she gazed on the uneouth form of Theige the Wolf, whom she mistook — no great mistake indeed — for one of those wild spirits, who, in the shape of little red men, are believed by the Irish to haunt lonely places among the mountains, and whose appearance is a sure sign of the speedy doom of the unfortunate person who beholds them. She looked upon him for an instant; and, on noticing the evil expression of his eyes, covered her

face with her hands, and sank, in the extremity of her terror, on a stone seat which lay beside her. Cu Allee noticed her dismay; and, although it did not at all advance her in his good graces, he did not hate her as he did every one else, for he began to imagine some resemblance between her and his young sister, whom he had laid not long ago in the old churchyard of Doneraile. In fact, in thinking of his sister, the only person for whom he ever felt any thing like affection, he began to cast about in his mind why he stood guard there upon a poor girl in whom he recognized a similarity of appearance, and to picture to himself how he would feel, after doing one good action, by effecting her liberation. It was with him as with all who have turned on the evil path through life. The human heart, in its innocence, is like a lovely bower, where the virtues with their fair train of good and beautiful thoughts make their dwelling: but, when the devil once gets possession of the keys, out go the virtues and their bright attendants, and, though they return frequently and knock for admittance, the stern answer of the evil demon inside scares them off, like a flock of white doves at the yell of the mountain eagle. By-and-by the demon hides the keys, the bower withers and becomes rotten, and the virtues, led by our good angel, go searching, searching, but, alas! rarely find the means of entrance to make it bloom again. The spirit of evil, in order to expel the good intention on this occasion from the breast of Cu Allee, thought

fit to send a delegate in the person of the Man of Wonders, who, advancing up the glen, whispered something into the ear of the dwarf, at which he quitted his post, and proceeded with wonderful agility up the mountain at the back of the hut. Na Meerval entered, but paused for a time inside the door when he found himself unnoticed by Ellen Roche, who, with her face buried in her mantle, sat still in the same position as when she retired on seeing Theige the Wolf. At length he spoke:—

“Yerrah! my dark flower o’ the mountains, is’n’t it unnathral to see you sittin’ that way, as bronach an’ sorrowful as if all belongin’ to you were laid out, an’ the wake-candles burnin’ over them?”

Ellen sat up, for she knew the voice. “An’ is it you,” she said, “you black-hearted villain, that spakes to me in such a way, after taking me away from my poor mother, whose heart, I know, is broke at the news already? Let me go, I say.” And she gathered her mantle around her, and prepared to dart from the door. “Let me go, or ’twon’t be long till some one you know will have his heavy revenge on you for this day’s work.”

“Fair an’ aisy, Misthress Ellen,” said Na Meerval, putting her back gently to her seat. “Listen to a few words I have to say, an’ ’twill make you a little kindher.”

“I can’t listen to any thing but about my laving this. You know you often got food an’ shelter an’ kindness in my mother’s house, an’ this is not the

way to pay back those who ever an' always helped you in your need."

"That very shelther an' kindness was my destruction; for, from the first night I slept undher your roof, I fell in love, — you know with whom, — an 'tis conshumin' my heart to cinders ever since. Listen to me for a minnit. There is one you think that's dhramin' o' you mornin', noon, an' night. I know him, of coorse. But I tell you that Moran O'Brien has stopt thinkin' o' you since yestherday; so, if he promised to do so always, he's false to his word. Take the love, then, of a truer man, who'll stick to you through life an' death."

"It is false," answered Ellen vehemently. "Moran is still true to me, an' will be as true to his revenge upon you, if you don't let me away."

"You don't know me, Ellen Roche. Thru or false, you'll never have him for a husband, nor have no one else either, barrin' myself. I tell you he'll never think on you more; an' look at this," said he, at the same time drawing a small silver cross from his bosom, "if he was true in his heart and soul, would he let a purty-faced crathure, nearly as nate as myself, take this from round his neck? Upon this blessed cross, taken from the neck of a false man, who never more can see you, I swear to love you through pace an' war, an' through life an' death, for ever an' ever."

Ellen looked at the cross. It was Moran's. She had herself placed it round his neck; and he, poor

fellow ! had vowed at the same time that he would never part with it but in death. Suddenly the thought flashed upon her mind that he was dead, — murdered by Na Meerval and his accomplices. She looked instinctively at the sword by Na Meerval's side. It was Moran's. The horrible reality burst at once upon her mind ; and, with a piercing and agonizing shriek, she sank senseless on the floor of the hut.

On awakening from her swoon, she found herself lying upon some soft heath in another apartment. A wooden vessel filled with water lay beside her upon a flat stone, with some bread. This she was enabled to observe by a few streams of red light which darted inwards through the chinks of an old wooden door which separated the recess in which she lay from the outer one. She cautiously arose, and, looking through one of the chinks, saw Na Meerval and his two comrades sitting round a heap of blazing wood in the apartment she had occupied on the preceding evening ; for it was now far advanced in the night. She turned round in silent misery and fear, and, sinking her face once more in the folds of her mantle, sat in her despair until another morning was shining gloriously over the gray summits and deep valleys that surrounded her.

CHAPTER III.

I buckled on my armor,
And my sword so keen and bright ;
I took my gallant charger,
And I rode him to the fight.
We met the foeman early,
Beside yon castle hoar,
And slew them all by tower and wall,
And by the dark lake-shore.

BALLAD.

ABOUT sunrise that morning John of the Bridle took his way up the gorge through which poor Ellen had been borne. He had returned from Kilmallock on the previous evening, after delivering the despatch, and joined the dancers on the green of Fannystown. On inquiring for Ellen Roche, he was told the incident that had occurred, and of Ellen's accompanying Na Meerval to her home. Suspecting some unfair dealing on the part of Na Meerval, he proceeded directly to the house of Maureen Roche ; but she could give no account of her daughter, except that she had gone early in the day to the dance. The alarm was given, and every place searched, even the cave where John of the Bridle met the three Timothys ; but no trace of the young girl could be found. John of the Bridle was on horseback most of that night, and, after sending some of his friends in other directions, took his way at sun-

rise up the gorge that led between the hills. On reaching the highest point of a craggy ridge, he directed his course over a wide and elevated moorland, strewn irregularly with huge masses of rock. Riding for some time in a southerly direction, he at length reached where the barren moorland merged into the stunted copsewood of the upland forest; and here he was met by a lathy and light-footed *gorsoon* whom he accosted.

"Rody," said he, "where is Remy of the Glen and the horsemen?"

"They're below, in the ould Castle o' Kilcolman, captin; but come on down to 'em, for they're in riglar currywhibles about somethin', an' wantin' you badly."

When they had proceeded for some time through the forest, Rody stopped. "There, captin, is the ould castle beyant there; an' here is the glin, fwhare all the horses are left for me to mind. So come down now, captin, an' let me put your horse wid the rest."

John of the Bridle dismounted, and, guided by Rody, led his horse to a deep hollow in the forest, with bushy precipices all round it; and here, feeding upon heaps of dried grass, stood between forty and fifty horses, accoutred, and ready for their owners. Leaving his horse among them to the care of Rody, John proceeded quickly along the forest pathway, until, at length, he stood before the ruined outworks of Kilcolman. Here he was met by a short, dark

man, who stood as sentinel by the broken gate, and who told him to go in at once, for those inside were impatiently expecting him. On entering the dilapidated doorway, before him opened an arch-roofed and gloomy apartment, the principal hall of the castle, lit by a great fire of blazing wood; which, as the chimney and windows were all stopped up, filled the whole space inside with a thick cloud of smoke. Around the fire, in various attitudes, talking, laughing, and eating, were congregated about twenty men, — some of the owners of the horses. The fire blazed and crackled, its red flame lighting up the wild visages of the horsemen, and glinting with picturesque effect on the half-polished arms that strewed the floor, or lay against the craggy walls. One young man, turning round, saw John of the Bridle, or the Captain, as they called him; for it was he that always led them on their wild forays.

“Arrah, blur-an-ages! here is the captin himself, at the very time we wanted him,” exclaimed the young man. “I bleeve ’twas the Good People themselves that sent him.”

“’Twas not, then, Shamus, but the very worst of people that sent me here. But why are ye sitting thus? and what account have ye of the troops that came out from Doneraile?”

“First an’ foremost, captin,” said Remy of the Glen, — a tall young fellow, the boldest and merriest looking of them all, and who, from the respect paid to his opinions by his comrades, appeared to have

the command in the absence of John of the Bridle, — “First an’ foremost, we’re waitin’ to know would you come; an’ second, we have a plan made out among ourselves that’ll maybe settle with them throopers — for they’re now comin’ over the hills back to Doneraile — better than if we met them on the hills; an’ — *aur vonom!* — ’twill give us what we hadn’t this many a day, — a little sport. Twenty o’ the boys are now lyin’ in ambush outside in the wood, an’ five or six more are over on the height; an’ the very minnit that the throopers get a look at them, they’re to run back here, an’ never stir out o’ this till the Black Captain begins to smoke them out. Dhar Dhia! when we ketch himself an’ his throopers among these ould thraps o’ walls, but I’ll soon have a betther helmet than this rusty ould gris-sid on my head at present!”

John of the Bridle was strategist enough to see that this was an excellent plan for settling accounts with the troopers. The only improvement he would suggest was that he should go himself, and head the ambuscade. He found the men outside crouched among the thick underwood of the forest, and waiting with impatience for the coming of their enemies. In the meantime those who served for a decoy sat upon the summit of a steep height, looking westward upon a troop of about thirty horsemen, returning from their murdering expedition. Suddenly one of the troopers looked up, and, beholding the wild-looking figures on the summit, pointed them out to

his leader, the Black Captain; who, sticking his long spurs into his horse's flanks, dashed towards them, followed by his men. Away rushed the others, making a circuit in order to avoid the hollow where the horses were concealed, and were just in among their comrades when the troopers appeared in front of the castle upon the shore of the lake.

"Ha, ha!" exclaimed one of them, as he entered, "we have the bloody murderers caught at last, an' by the morthial big soord o' Brian Boru, bud they have nate horses!"

All inside now arose, and stood darkly around Remy of the Glen, their arms flashing in the red firelight, and the glow of revenge and hate shining in their wild countenances as they listened for the onset of their enemies. Remy now looked out, and beheld through the shattered outworks the troopers in a cluster by the lake, apparently deliberating on the best method of capturing the fugitives of the castle. Among them stood Theige the Wolf, like an evil spirit, grinning with glee at the prospect of the exercise he was apparently to have in his darling profession of a skibbioch, or hangman. The Black Captain now gave some orders, at which they all dismounted; and one of them, a low-sized, lank-visaged, but stout man, who went by the euphonious name of Corporal Ebenezer Kick-the-Goad, advanced to the gateway of the castle.

"Come forth," he exclaimed, "ye robbing Amalekites, or ye shall die the death of wolves, whom ye

initate, betaking yourselves to dens and caverns to avoid the path of the just and chosen ! ”

The answer was a couple of bullets from the inside, one of which stretched him by the gate, wounding him severely ; the other breaking the leg of the Black Captain's horse, which stood on the shore almost in a direct line behind him.

“ Now, by the soul of Abraham ! ” said the captain, “ they shall die. Follow me, children of Zion ; and we'll send their souls from yon unhallowed den to get an eternal taste of the punishments awaiting God's accursed.”

All now advanced towards the gateway, firing as they went, their shot killing a few inside. The besieged, on their part, were not idle ; for, as the troopers came clambering up the gateway, and through the ragged apertures of the outworks, they were saluted by a volley from the doorway which killed several of them, and sent the Black Captain rolling over and over in his death agony almost down to the shore of the lake. Finding their reception a little too hot, the rest retreated behind the shelter of the walls, in order to get time for a little deliberation before they renewed the attack.

“ That's my shot,” said Remy of the Glen, when he saw the Black Captain rolling down ; “ an' his helmet an' back-an-breast are mine. Poor Randal Breen, that broke the horse's leg outside, has no claim ; for he's shot himself.”

The command of the besiegers now devolved

upon a gigantic, iron-visaged man, the tallest of the troop, who, as he said himself, had cast away as an unhallowed thing his name of the flesh, but amply recompensed himself by taking the tremendous appellation of Habakuk Burn-the-Gentiles. This changing of names was the universal custom of the Puritans of those days. Burn-the-Gentiles held the rank of sergeant, and was an experienced and courageous soldier. The ambushade had not yet come out from their hiding-place, and it is necessary to explain the reason. The Black Captain, on picketing the horses, had left them in care of Cu Allee and the Rev. Hezekiah Shout-the-Word-from-Zion; who, although a preacher of the Word, was perhaps one of the keenest-eyed soldiers of the troop. At the moment of the first attack, the ambushade, therefore, could not by any possibility come unawares on their enemies. Various methods were now suggested by the troopers for dislodging the besieged, but Burn-the-Gentiles at length proposed one which was universally acceded to.

“Comrades in the chosen path,” he said, “the cunning of the Amoritish slaves hath prevailed for the moment. But it shall avail them not. Even as Samson burned the vineyards, so shall we burn to the death those children of sin in yon accursed house. Depart. Gather ye fern and the dried grass of the forest, and place it even as a burning and suffocating and scorching barrier before the door of the heathen.”

This order was obeyed with such alacrity that they soon had a great heap of half-withered boughs, grass, and fern, piled up beside the outer wall. Of this, each took a portion; and, stealing round the corners of the castle, they threw their bundles from them into the doorway, and in a short time had the whole space filled up with combustibles ready for the igniting spark. The heap was now set on fire, and all thronged around, — even the Reverend Hezekiah himself coming up from the horses to be a witness, — and stood in immense satisfaction at the idea of the sport they were to have in the charitable work of roasting half-a-dozen of their fellow-creatures; and so intent were they on the interesting operation, that they never noticed the approach of a body of men equalling themselves in number, which, led by John of the Bridle, came slowly but surely to the attack behind them. On came these vengeful men, stealing through the bushwood, like panthers approaching their prey. Suddenly, with a savage yell, they sprang upon the rear of the terrified troopers; and at the same moment the burning heath was scattered, as by the blast of a tempest, from the doorway, and out rushed Remy of the Glen and his remaining followers. Shot after shot rang around the ancient castle, shout and groan and sabre-clash woke the sullen echoes of the lake: but, after some moments, a few groans, scarcely louder than the murmur of the waves against the shore, fell upon the ear; for all the troopers, except Burn-the-Gen-

tiles, Shout-the-Word-from-Zion, and a few others with equally astounding appellations, met their death in that wild onset. The horse of John of the Bridle, hearing the shots, broke loose from the guardianship of Rody, and darted down to the scene of conflict. John sprang upon his back, and with a few others, who had each appropriated a trooper's horse, galloped away in pursuit of the fugitives, while the remainder of his men rushed after the chargers of the other dead troopers, which were careering in all directions around Lough Ullair. On riding somewhat more than a mile in pursuit of Burn-the-Gentiles, who had turned in a different direction from his comrades, John of the Bridle reined in his horse; for the redoubtable sergeant fled with such reckless rapidity through the forest that it was quite useless to pursue him any farther.

In the mean time, John's men had secured the horses, and brought them in; and were now crowded in front of the castle, dividing the spoils of their fallen enemies. Some of their own comrades had also fallen, their bodies lying side by side with those of the troopers. In the absence of their captain, Remy was necessarily the umpire; and it was amusing to see with what tact and rapidity he managed the affair. Putting aside the horses to be disposed of according to the judgment of John of the Bridle, he first cast away his own old rusty helmet, and arrayed himself in the bright morion and corselet of the Black Captain; then to one of his men he gave

a back-and-breast, to another a sword and belt, and to some one else a helmet, and so on until the whole spoil was disposed of in a satisfactory manner.

Whilst engaged in admiring themselves in their new habiliments, they heard a shriek behind them; and, on turning round, beheld Alice O'Brien running towards them, pursued by a tall, dark woman who seemed blind with fury, for she still came on quite unheeding the threatening gestures of Remy and his comrades. Remy ran towards Alice, who fell fainting into his arms; and a few others laid hold on her pursuer, who struggled and kicked and bit in their grasp with all the energy of a demon. Alice and the woman were still in the apartment described in the beginning of the first chapter, when the castle was suddenly occupied by Remy of the Glen and his companions. Not knowing who were beneath them, they had remained hidden during the morning. Then came the noise of the fighting, the silence, and the distribution of the spoils: and Alice, hearing her cousin Remy's voice, could bear the suspense no longer; so, darting suddenly out through a ruined window, she clambered down the old broken wall, pursued by the woman, and was thus happily restored to her friends. The old woman now seemed calmed a little in her fury; but, in all the varieties of abuse that the human tongue is capable of, she commenced to demonstrate to her captors that she was not at all afraid of them or any thing they could do.

"Take the ould bird o' Satin into the castle, an'

roast her, like a throu, upon the fire," said one of the horsemen.

"Tie her to one o' the horse's tails, the ould ban-shee, and let him whip, like a thimble-man, through the forest wid her," exclaimed another.

"No," said Remy, "let her go her own ways. We have got plenty of her already." And, with that, she was liberated; and, leaving Alice and the horseman, with many a curse upon her tongue, she walked off round the lake, and took her way in the direction of Doneraile.

CHAPTER IV.

But oh ! one morn I clomb a hill,
To sigh alone, to weep my fill,
And there Heaven's mercy sent to me
My treasure rare, Ben — Erinni !

IRISH BALLAD.

REINING up from the pursuit of Burn-the-Gen-tiles, John of the Bridle dismounted in a deep hollow of the forest, in order to fasten a strap of his armor which had become loosened in the fray. On sheathing his sword, and while in the act of buckling the strap, he was seized around the body and arms as if in the grasp of a giant, and dashed roughly on his back to the ground. And it was truly a giant; for, on looking up, the young horseman be-

held Theige of the Red Cloak standing over him, with an expression of triumphant hate in his massive features, and his skean in his hand, ready to prevent his victim from making any movement of escape. John instinctively moved his hand to where his sword ought to have been; but the belt had been unbuckled when he was grasped first, and sword and dagger thrown to a distance from where he lay. Just at this moment, the attention of both was attracted to another object. It was Cu Allee, who had made his escape from the battle, and who now, darting from the thicket, was instantly clinging, like a catamount, to the saddle of John's charger. The horse, not at all relishing this companionship, commenced rearing and dashing wildly up and down the hollow, till at length, by means of an agile spring to one side and a demivolt, he landed his rider in the bottom of a rough, gravelly drain. Up started Cu Allee with a shrill yell of vengeance, and all bleeding from the fall; and, with his long dagger gleaming in his hand, rushed after the horse, which, clearing the thicket at the verge of the hollow, gained the more open part of the forest, and was soon safe from the resentment of his pursuer. Folling Dearg turned again to his prostrate captive.

"Ha, ha!" he almost yelled, with a savage laugh of triumph, "hur is caught at last. Dhar Vurrhia! but it was like a riffinly little dog follyin' on the thrack of a wild wolf. An' a dog's death Shane na Shrad must die for that sore blow in the cave, an'

for crossing Thiege Folling Dearn in his love." And, so saying, he made John of the Bridle arise and march off in the direction of the Fairy Whitethorn; Folling Dearn keeping close behind, with a short gun ready pointed in his hand; and Cu Allee closer still, his dagger ready to be plunged into the back of their captive, should he make any hostile movement.

During the early part of that day, a burst of gay sunshine had flooded hill and valley; but, as the morning advanced, the sky was overstrewn by layers of dull, copper-colored clouds, which came moving up from the eastern horizon with the slowness and regularity of a well-disciplined army proceeding to battle. Not a breeze stirred the leaves on the thickets; and a dead and oppressive silence reigned around, which was at length broken by a low, rumbling sound behind the distant mountains. A sudden flash now illuminated the far-off horizon. It was succeeded by others, which, as they came, traversed a wider arch of the heavens, and by thunder, each successive peal waxing louder and more hollow, till the very earth seemed bursting behind the hills. At length, and just as Timothy of the Red Cloak and his ill-favored companion, with their captive, were descending the side of a bare mountain, a bright ball of electric fire burst from the bosom of a black mass of cloud on the summit, and, darting in a zigzag course along the sky, burst, overspreading the whole wide arch with a flood of blinding and intense

brilliancy. Then came a dead silence, only broken by the patter of a few heavy rain-drops, which was succeeded by an explosion so loud and hollow that the very rocks seemed tottering from their firm foundations. A black column of falling rain, like a waterspout, now advanced up the eastern heights, and spread and spread till the dark moorland and steep valley were one universal hiss and clatter of falling drops.

Unstayed for a moment by the gloom and loud deluging of the storm, John of the Bridle and his captors proceeded over the bogs till they reached the edge of the deep glen through which the Ounanar, now swelled into a great torrent, rushed downward on the rocks, whirling along its jagged banks with a roar that almost drowned the frequent reverberations of the thunder overhead. Before them the stream was too deep and violent to attempt a passage across; so they proceeded upwards some distance to the junction of its two branches, where its bed was broader, and consequently more shallow. Here they changed their order of march, and began to wade the torrent, Folling Dearg in front of the captive, and Cu Allee close behind, with his long dagger still glittering in his hand. Close above them the two streams rushed into one, forming a black and boiling pool, whose waters, as if eager for more noisy strife, issuing out, foamed and hissed and roared hoarsely around the many fragments of rock that obstructed their way to the narrow and

torn channel some distance below. The three were now past the middle of the torrent. A bright blaze of lightning for an instant illuminated the gloomy valley, when, with almost the suddenness of the electric flash, John of the Bridle turned round, snatched his sword-belt from the shoulders of Cu Allee, and dashed headlong downward into the whirling current. That wild current, reinforced by some roaring tributary, now rose with fearful suddenness higher and higher, till it became too powerful for mortal strength to contend against; so the disappointed pair, after a few unsuccessful plunges, were fain to scramble to the bank before them, and leave John of the Bridle to the flood, which they supposed would dash him to pieces against the rocks beneath them in the glen. But the sudden swell saved him; for, just as he was about to be shot downward through the narrow channel, he was raised high enough to catch at the naked roots of a giant ash-tree which grew upon the edge of the bank. With a mighty effort he heaved himself upward, and clutched one of these; scrambled higher still, and stood all blinded by the yellow foam upon the bank where they first looked for a ford across the torrent. At length he turned round, and shook his sword at the two as they stood beneath the cliffs at the opposite side. For answer to his defiance, a bullet from the musketoon of Folling Dearg whistled across the glen, and struck with a shrill clang upon his breastplate, but, unable to penetrate the good steel,

glanced aside, striking off the head of a sapling that grew hard by. Little relishing another visitor like this, John of the Bridle struck upwards through the wood; and, on gaining the open heath, took his way in the direction of the spot where he was made prisoner that morning.

After crossing a high, plashy bog, he began to ascend a stone-strewn hill, on whose summit rose a cairn,—probably an ancient landmark, or some monumental heap, erected long ago over some chief who had fallen in battle among the hills. The rain now began to abate, and, as he stood beside the cairn, had ceased altogether. He sat himself upon a fragment of stone, and looked around. Beneath him, towering over the green forest, lay Kilcolman Castle. Between him and the skirts of the forest spread a slanting and rushy moorland, across which a body of horsemen were now advancing, whom, notwithstanding the distance, he instantly knew to be his own comrades. As they drew nearer, he could distinguish that one horse was without a rider, and that a female, seated behind a horseman, came on in the front of the cavalcade. Without waiting to see more, he now set off across the moor, as quickly as he could, towards a deep glen, which he knew was to be crossed by his companions. He and they coming to opposite sides of the glen at the same time, they soon observed him, and gave a wild and glad shout of recognition; on which, the led horse, breaking away from the rider that held him,

dashed down across the glen, and, with many a glad-some neigh, came bounding towards the spot where John of the Bridle stood. It was his own steed. After escaping from Cu Allee, he was caught by Rody, in the forest, and brought in with the other horses. But a far more welcome surprise now awaited John. The party had crossed the glen, and were close upon him, when the female sprang lightly from behind Remy of the Glen, and the next moment John of the Bridle was clasping fondly to his breast his long-lost and long-sought love, Alice O'Brien. As the wild horsemen circled round, and surveyed the meeting of the lovers, their rugged countenances lit up with pleasure; and each began to tell, with many rough oaths and contradictions, how and where they had rescued Alice.

"Arrah, by the holy staff o' the saint!" exclaimed Remy of the Glen, "but if we're not real fortunate men! There I was this mornin', with a bare breast, an' an ould rusty pot of a helmet; an' here I am now with the black ould Parliaminther's back-an'-breast, an' a helmet as bright as the flamin' diamond o' Lough Lein. But what is it all to the bringin' back o' my sweet cousin Alice into the arms of our captin, her own true an' dear lover, as she says herself? I'll bet my new helmet against Jack Burke's ould spurs that I'll grind the flags of any floor to smithereens, dancin' at their weddin'!" And, with that, he turned his spurs inward, and, in the excess of his delight, commenced driving his horse in an

infinite number of capers and gambadoes around the splashing bog.

“Little you knew, John,” said Alice, after they had mutually told the sorrow each felt during the time they were separated, “little you knew, when speaking to Theige of the Red Cloak about restoring me, that it was he and his men bore me away into the hills. They stole upon me that evening at the milking bawn in Glenisheen, and took me first to his hut beside the fairy whitethorn. The black traitor! did he think that I could give my heart to such as he, — a betrayer among his own companions, and to his native country? When he found it all in vain, he took me away to Kilcolman, and left me with his sister, to sell me to the Black Captain, — he who, they tell me, lies beyond there by the wall of the castle. But I am rescued; and now, my dearest John, we meet, I hope, to part no more.”

Leaving John and Alice to their happy thoughts, it is time to return to Folling Dearn and his sweet-faced companion. They made no attempt to pursue their captive, for the simple reason that it was impossible for them to cross the flood; but, turning upwards along the edge of the glen, they soon reached their hut, opposite the whitethorn. In its outer apartment Theige na Meerval was sitting before them; and, to judge by the expression of his countenance, he seemed in no very elysian humor. They stood silent for some time, the face of each indicating in its own peculiar manner the dark pas-

sions aroused by disappointment. Na Meerval was the first to break it:—

“Cu Allee’s work is over, is it? An’ why didn’t you bring Shane na Shrad here, as you promised, an’ let him take his last swing from the branch of the whitethorn outside? Or maybe he escaped ye. Ha! you said this mornin’ that your revinge was so strong that you could scent Shane na Shrad’s footsteps thro’ coom an’ forest, wherever he went.”

“My curse upon this roarin’ flood undher us!” exclaimed Folling Dearn, “when we were crossin’, an’ so far that we couldn’t get back here agin, it, I may say, took him in its arms, an’ tore him from between us, an’ threw him safe upon the bank we left. An’ he’s gone. My black an’ heavy an’ burnin’ curses upon him, night, noon, and mornin’!”

“Yes: Cu Allee’s work!” said that worthy: “why didn’t you do the work you got for yourself? There is a difference between bringin’ a strong man across a floody river, and coming round the colleen you have inside there. I thought ye’d be in love with each other in a minnit. Why didn’t you do that work with your sleight-o’-hand?”

“I’ll do it yet,” answered the little man, in all the energy of vindictive passion; “an’ if I can’t,” continued he, laying his hand upon his dagger, “there’s some sleight-o’-hand in this, an’ I’ll make it help me, an’ be my matchmaker.”

“If I’d depended upon my skean, an’ not upon Cu Allee’s gad,” said Folling Dearn, “my mortal

inimy wouldn't be walkin' free across the mountains this blessed hour. But maybe he isn't gone far yet. The flood will soon begin to go down; give us somethin' to ate, an' we'll see what revinge can do to overtake him."

After partaking of some black, coarse bread, and making a few other preparations, they crossed the flood once more, and set out again in pursuit of John of the Bridle.

When something more than an hour had passed, Na Meerval rolled away the large stone with which the door of the inner apartment was fastened, and stood once more in the presenee of Ellen Roche.

"Come!" said he sternly, "this is my third an' last time for askin' you. Say you'll have me, love or no love, an' your troubles are over."

Ellen had tried every kind of entreaty before. She now determined to brave it out, and meet her fate, if it came to the worst, as fearlessly as she could.

"I said that but once in my life, an' you know to whom: ean I say it now to one of the murderers of my betrothed Moran?"

"Your betrothed! He's betrothed to the worms by this, an' what's the use o' thinkin' about him any longer? Think o' the long life that's before you, an' that you must spend it in my company, whether you like it or not. Think o' the fair journeys an' pleasant days an' fine dresses you'll have when my wife, an' forget your betrothed for a truer man. I ask again. Say but that you'll have me, an' we'll

leave the company of Folling Dearg an' Cu Allee, an' fly to a more peaceful land, where we can live together happy."

"I think," rejoined Ellen, "of the life that was before me, and that you have blasted for ever. I think of him who lies in some bloody nook, with none to pray for him, and none to cover him from the ravens an' the wild wolves of the hills. I think of all this; and, if I live, each day your life will be near the brink, while I am near you. Keep me, then, if you dare; an' see how I'll remember the long life before me!"

The Man of Wonders saw that any further picturing of a pleasant life in his company to Ellen was useless. His demeanor now changed with a startling suddenness. As a connected set of machinery with its complicated wheels, when one important spring is put out of order, whirls round, and runs into irretrievable confusion and destruction, so, when one passion is set completely loose, a host of others is aroused to help its madness. And it was so with Na Meerval. His vindictive eyes, and every lineament of his face, seemed lighted up and blazing with the anger of disappointed love, if his could be called love; and the revenge that knows no merey was but too truly shown in the iron grasp with which he clutched his dagger, as he drew it to strike at the defenceless bosom of poor Ellen Roche. But, the moment he raised his dagger, he was struck from behind himself, on the head,

and with a force that stretched him swooning on the floor.

Accustomed as Na Meerval was to produce wonders the most amazing, he was not at all prepared for the miraculous change of circumstances that presented itself to his view on his recovery. The first thing apparent to his awakening senses was himself, Theige of the Red Cloak, and Theige the Wolf, bound hand and foot, and sitting side by side, with osier gads, or withes, round their necks, under the three ominous branches of the fairy whitethorn. Immediately before them stood a short, dark-browed man, who seemed calculating the height of those three branches from the ground, and apparently having in his mind's eye a lively picture of three men dangling in the intervening space. Around the tree, in various attitudes beside their horses, were the men of John of the Bridle, who himself, with his lieutenant, Remy of the Glen, stood a small distance outside the group, talking to Alice O'Brien and Ellen Roche. There was a horrible light in the eyes of both his comrades, which told Na Meerval too plainly what was to be their fate and his own.

"Where," exclaimed he, not yet able to collect his thoughts, — "where is my skean gone to, that I had this minnit so firm in my hand? Ha! did I stab myself, that this blood is flowin' down my back?"

"Go an' ask Remy o' the Glen," answered Folling Dearg; "that's the man that put the blood flowin'

down your back, when you should be protectin' yourself, instead o' raisin' your dagger to the breast of a wake girl."

"Ha!" said Na Meerval, now fully awakened, "we're caught in our own thrap at last. My curse upon the two that had strong revinge in their hearts, an' their legs upon the free hills, an' couldn't escape from their worst inimies!"

"Were they free hills," exclaimed Cu-Allee, with a wild volubility in his native tongue, "when they waited for us in the thickets, as the wild-cat waits for its prey; and when they sprang upon us, and bound us hand and foot, before we could find our dagger-hilts to defend ourselves? And are they free hills here, when we have the keen, torturing, and destroying gads about our necks, that will send us with strange, piercing pain, and mortal fear and anguish, into the other world?"

"Stop," answered Folling Dearn, with a sullen and ferocious look, "stop your pains and tormints: what is the torthure o' death to the tormints I feel at bein' bound this way, an' seein' him beyant there, talkin' to Alice O'Brien? Shane na Shrad," he continued, raising his voice, "I have but small time to live; but, if I had a thousand years, every day of id would be spent plannin' revinge, till I had sarved you as I sarved your lovin' frind, Moran O'Brien. My etarnal curse upon the fate — an' may the torrent dhry for ever in its bed — that tore you from my grasp!"

John of the Bridle made no reply; but, after saying a few words to the dark-faced man who was calculating the height of the branches, proceeded with Remy of the Glen and the two young maidens up the valley, and left the three Timothys to their doom.

A few days after the death of the three Timothys, there was another merry dance on the green of Fannystown. But it was more of a novelty this time, for there was a bride and bridegroom to lead the measure; John of the Bridle — or Captain John, as he was at last entitled to be called — and Alice O'Brien having been joined heart and hand the same morning by the young priest who attended the cavalry force then occupying Castle na Doon.

Ellen Roche's sorrow was deep and true for her dead lover. But, as months wore on, time began to soften her grief; and she eventually became the bride of Remy of the Glen, John's lieutenant, whose timely blow rescued her from the dagger of the Man of Wonders.

Years upon years had passed away, until the gray fortifications of Kilcolman were level with the grass, and even the forests themselves were now dead upon the hills; but the ancient tree lived on in its solitude of Glenanar, regarded with a strange reverence by the peasantry, and still called by them "the Whitethorn of the three Timothys."



ROSALEEN; OR, THE WHITE LADY OF BARNA.

A STRANGE case!" said the doctor, as he came upon a certain page of his manuscript.

"What is it?" I inquired.

"‘Captain John Fitzgerald and Rosaleen his wife, aged eighty-four and eighty-two respectively,’" pursued the doctor, heedless of my question, and reading from the closely-written page. "‘June 30, 1858,’" continued he aloud once more, after a few moments' silent perusal, "‘ten o'clock, P.M.; respiration weak, pulse forty-five and forty respectively;’" and then followed a long and minute catalogue of appearances and symptoms, on coming to the end of which, the doctor, who was in one of his fits of abstraction, sat up straight before his desk, and gazed vacantly into my face as I sat opposite. "Eleven o'clock, P.M.," he resumed at length, half remembering my question, "cheerfully and without pain they both died,—died on the same instant."

"Who were they, Doctor?" inquired I again.

“They must have been a strange pair, when they fasten on your memory so firmly.”

“They were my best friends,” answered the doctor, now fully awake, “and had their troubles like other mortals, — or rather, I should say, unlike other people, as you will see by reading that.” And he handed me over his manuscript, in the perusal of which I was soon eagerly engaged, leaving him to pore with critical eye over some recent numbers of “The Lancet.”

The doctor’s manuscript was beautifully and closely written; and, if printed, and denuded of the quaint technical phrases with which it was so frequently interspersed, would make a handsome nov-
elette. An abridgment of the tale, however, will better suit our purposes at the present:—

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, there dwelt at the foot of a certain high mountain, in the south of Ireland, a gentleman named Weston, whose wife had died a few years after their marriage, leaving behind her to deplore her loss a son and a daughter. The demesne adjoining that of Westonwood belonged to an old gentleman who had served for a long time as an officer in the French army, and whose name was Fitzgerald. His only son John was about the same age as that of young Weston. The two old gentlemen lived on terms of very close intimacy with one another, and the youngsters were consequently very often companions in their sports. Young Weston was, while yet

a boy, of a dark and violent disposition, subject to frequent fits of morose moodiness or passion, during which he was often known to vent his anger with strange vindictiveness on his father's domestics, and in fact on any one who interfered with him even in the slightest degree. His sister, on the other hand, was a bright, handsome little creature, full of joyous spirits, and beloved by the whole neighborhood. In the frequent rambles of these three young people together, John Fitzgerald, who was a bold and light-hearted boy, was, during the gloomy fits of her brother, thrown into the exclusive company of little Rosaleen Weston, helping her over thicket and brook, gathering wild berries and nuts for her in the autumn, and bringing her many a blooming nosegay of flowers in the summer, from the leafy dells and fairy hollows and romantic crags that lay around their homes.

It was the old story. As years rolled on, their childish fondness ripened into love, and they were as happy for a time as human hearts could be. The old gentlemen met frequently, and talked jovially over their wine of the prospects of their children, and even of the day when John Fitzgerald and the fair Rosaleen were to be united heart and hand in marriage. They were happy, that young pair; but they little knew that in a certain dark heart there was a plot fast maturing to put a period to their joy, and blight their future lives. Their enemy, strange to say! was young Weston. Since his early boy-

hood, from some unknown cause, he had hated young Fitzgerald; but, with the consummate tact peculiar to a vindictive and treacherous mind, he continued to conceal his hatred beneath the mask of a friendly countenance. This was the more dangerous, as young Fitzgerald was of an open and impetuous temper, simple and confiding, and never restrained himself in telling to the brother of his affianced bride every secret of his heart, — every thing that arose to his mind at the impulse of the moment.

Young Weston secretly and skilfully continued to work at his dark plans as time wore on, and unfortunately the political disturbances of the time aided him surely in his treacherous intents. In an unguarded hour, John Fitzgerald disclosed to him his connection with a band of United Irishmen that were at the time maturing their plans for raising the South on the breaking out of the war. This band of United Men was at the time under the command of several young gentlemen who held a high place in society, and among whom John Fitzgerald was held in high esteem, on account of his daring courage and the knowledge of military tactics he displayed at their secret meetings. The disclosure of his fatal secret to young Weston filled that worthy with an infamous delight, knowing as he did that his base plot was coming speedily to its consummation; and yet he hesitated to inform his father, who was a magistrate, because he was well aware of the strong friendship that existed between the two old

gentlemen, and suspected that his disclosure would not have the desired effect. But he adopted another plan. One morning his father walked out to the kennel to see how some of his favorite fox-hounds were getting on ; and met Ter Kelly, the whipper-in, before him, most industriously attending to the morning meal of the noisy dogs.

“Well, Ter,” asked the old gentleman, “how is Miss Biddy to-day ?” (Miss Biddy, by the way, was the favorite of the pack, and had been sick for a few days previous.)

“Begor! your honor,” answered the slippery Ter, “she’s gittin’ on most beautifully. Look at her how she aits! May I never sin, if she’s not able this morthial minnit to swally a fox, body an’ sowl, an’ all bekaise o’ the dhrop o’ potheen I gave her this mornin’ to warm her heart, the crathur!”

“She looks better certainly,” rejoined his master, turning away satisfied; but this did not suit Ter Kelly.

“I hope your honor is better o’ the rheumatics this mornin’, sir,” he said, “an’ that you heard the morthial an’ awful news that’s runnin’ about, like wildfire, through the counthry.”

“What news, you scoundrel?” answered his master, whose joints began to be afflicted at the moment with some twinges of the unpleasant malady Ter had just named.

“The news about the ruction that’s to be, your honor,” answered Ter; “an’ about the way the

United Men are meeting every night, an' preparin' to massacray every livin' sojer in the counthry. They say also, that the young masther over the way," and he pointed his thumb knowingly in the direction of Fitzgerald's home, "that he is to be ginerall over them; an' that his name is mentioned in the prophecy of Saint Columkill, an' that he's to walk knee-deep in the blood o' the "—

"Is that all?" said the old foxhunter, turning away suddenly, and thus cutting short Ter's sanguinary communication.

That was all that morning. But day by day the news came in from every side, confirming Ter's statement, till at last old Weston began to think seriously on the matter. It is enough to say, that, ere a week was over, — so artfully had young Weston worked out his plans, — the two old gentlemen were estranged, and all intercourse forbidden between Rosaleen and her faithful lover, John Fitzgerald. But prohibitions like this are rarely obeyed. The lovers still met frequently, and vowed eternal constancy to one another at each parting.

It was the summer of '98; and the insurrection had at length broken out, bringing consternation and sorrow to many a household throughout the length and breadth of the land. John Fitzgerald at length received a secret summons that should be obeyed. It was an intimation from the insurgent commander, that his services were required at headquarters; and, notwithstanding his love for Rosaleen

and other circumstances, he began his preparations for setting out for Wexford, where the war was then raging furiously. The disclosure of his intention fell heavily on the heart of poor Rosaleen Weston. After the first burst of her grief was over, they agreed to have one other interview before his departure; and, when the hour came, they met at the usual trysting-place, — a deep and woody dell that extended up the breast of the high mountain.

They sat beside the tiny stream that tinkled downward through the quiet glen, and, with all they had to say, did not perceive the time passing, till the approach of sunset. The spot on which they were sitting afforded a splendid view over the broad and varied plain that extended far away from the foot of the mountains, and that was bounded on the south by a steep and picturesque range of hills, the green slopes and summits of which the setting sun was now gilding with his expiring glories.

“It is a hard thing to part, dearest,” said John Fitzgerald, looking fondly into the tearful eyes of Rosaleen; “but it is harder still to stay inactive here, branding my name with dishonor, breaking my plighted oath, and perhaps hiding my head in shame, while my countrymen are bravely fighting for their liberties.”

“It is hard, John,” said Rosaleen, “but does it not seem harder to leave me? Alas! why did you

take that fatal oath of the United Men? Have you not liberty enough?"

"I have, perhaps, liberty enough, Rosaleen," answered her lover; "but there are thousands of my countrymen ground down to the dust, and it is my duty to give my humble aid in assisting them to arise. But I shall not be long away, dearest," continued he. "The war cannot last long; and then, when we are victorious, as I trust we surely shall be; when I have gained by my deeds preferment in the new army of my country, — then, darling, I will return and claim you as my brightest reward."

"Alas!" answered Rosaleen, as she burst into tears, "it will be a perilous time for you, John; and, for my part, I cannot look on the matter in any other light. You are going wilfully into danger, and the day you mention may never come."

"But it will come, Rosaleen," exclaimed her lover vehemently. "Our plans are laid well, and trust me, that, with God's blessing, I shall come back soon, and claim you for my wife. And now we must part. Good-by, and may Heaven bless and guard you!" And the brave young enthusiast clasped her in his arms, kissed her wet cheeks fondly, and in a moment was gone. That night the United Men met on the summit of the mountain. John Fitzgerald was elected their commander; and, putting himself at their head, he marched gallantly down into the plain, and by many a wild and unfrequented path shaped his course for Wexford.

A deep melancholy fell upon the spirits of Rosaleen Weston, after the departure of her lover. She that was so joyous and happy while she knew the chosen of her heart was near, now that he was gone — gone to encounter hardship and privation, and perhaps to meet death upon the field of battle — was almost mad with grief, and knew not a moment's interval of enjoyment. There are some, who, when parting from those they love, feel a sudden and violent burst of sorrow, which, like the mountain torrent when the storm is over, soon subsides; but the grief of Rosaleen was not of this kind: though deep and strong, it was as enduring as her very life itself. Her friends, her father, and all tried to comfort her, but in vain.

The country was now in a state of dreadful commotion. The insurgents had at length met the royal army face to face upon a fair field, and had conquered. Day after day news came of the progress of the war. Three successive engagements had again been fought, and in each of them the royal party had been worsted. It was indeed surprising to witness the celerity with which the intelligence of a battle spread throughout the country at this time. Fugitives endeavoring to return secretly to their homes from some skirmish in which they had been badly wounded, carmen driving downward after being pressed into the service of royalists or insurgents to convey baggage to Wexford, disbanded or deserting yeoman hurrying with

terror in their countenances to some place of protection, spread — as they brought information of the success or discomfiture of the insurgent armies — joy or sorrow throughout the southern province. But still no news came of John Fitzgerald.

Matters at last came to a crisis. The battle of Vinegar Hill was fought and lost by the insurgents; chiefly indeed through their own misconduct, and the irresolution and disagreement of their generals. Home was now their signal word; and, as they passed in detached parties through the southern counties, they spread sorrow and consternation on their way. A few days after the battle, as Rosaleen was sitting on a shady seat out on the lawn, thinking with sorrowful heart upon the probable fate of her lover, she saw her brother riding quickly towards her up a narrow walk that led to the public road. He dismounted, and, as he took a seat near her, appeared much excited, and in a far lighter and more jovial mood than was usual to his dark temperament. From this, however, she could augur nothing favorable, and, with a sad presentiment at her heart, begged of him, if he had, as he seemed, any intelligence to communicate, to do so at once.

“I was riding a few hours,” he said, with an expression of mock sorrow in his dark face, “at the foot of the hill, and came upon a party of the broken-down rebels returning from the thrashing they got at Vinegar Hill. I inquired about my old comrade, John Fitzgerald” —

“My God, Harry!” exclaimed Rosaleen, “tell me, I beg of you, what about him, at once,—at once, I tell you; for, no matter what’s past, he is still my betrothed husband.”

“I am going to do so,” answered her brother coolly. “They told me that on the evening of the battle, while leading—like a general, of course—the small detachment under his command into the final charge—they said that he was struck by a cannon-shot, and left for dead upon the field. That’s the fate of your general that—according to his calculations—was to be.”

Poor Rosaleen could hear no more. With a wild shriek of despair and grief, she fell insensible from her seat. This was a result which her cruel brother very little expected; and, feeling now a real apprehension, he alarmed the servants, and Rosaleen was conveyed to her chamber. But there all their efforts to restore her to consciousness proved unavailing. A doctor was sent for immediately to the nearest town; but, when he arrived and learned the circumstances, he shook his head, and told her father that he had very serious fears regarding her recovery. His fears were but too well founded; for, at the dawn of the next morning, she awoke in the delirium of a brain fever. For many days the wild delirium continued. At length it subsided somewhat. For some hours she spoke to those around her with a strange and unnatural calmness; but the wandering fits again returned, again sub-

sided and returned, and she finally relapsed into a state of mental derangement. Poor Rosaleen, the accomplished, the guileless, the beautiful! the fair fabric of her mind was sapped to its foundation, and the bright hopes she had built up seemed shattered forevermore.

After some time she began to gain a little strength, and was permitted by her father to take a short walk, occasionally, into the garden and round the lawn, but at first always attended by her nurse. On these occasions, with that affecting simplicity peculiar to persons in her state, she usually employed herself in searching round the shrubberies, and underneath the old beech-trees that studded the lawn, for something which she appeared desirous of keeping secret. On returning one evening from one of these rambles, she appeared more dejected than usual; and, when her nurse inquired the cause of her sadness, she burst into a violent fit of weeping, saying that she was ever searching round the lawn for John Fitzgerald's grave, but that she could never find it. Time wore on: the vigilance with which she was watched began to be relaxed, and she was frequently permitted to walk alone round the lawn, and farther into the demesne. She had not indeed abandoned the idea that her lover's grave was somewhere near; and between searching for it, and plucking garlands of wild flowers to deck it, should her search prove successful, she spent most of her time in the open air during the beautiful evenings

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of declining summer, but at the same time always returned punctually before nightfall.

One evening Rosaleen Weston did not appear in her father's parlor at her usual hour. The old gentleman, after waiting some time, sent out a couple of the servants to see what caused her delay. They came hastily back, saying that they had searched round all her haunts, but could not find her. A general search was now made, but it was unsuccessful. The tenantry around were by this time made acquainted with what had happened; and a sharp search was made round the villages near, round the base of the mountain, and into the wild dells where she loved so much to ramble when John Fitzgerald was by her side: but still no Rosaleen could be found. In the darkness, still the search was continued; but it was unavailing. Morning dawned upon the heart-broken father and the remorseful brother, and another and more vigorous search was made, but with the same success as on the preceding day and night.

Years before, ere dissension had arisen between their fathers, young Rosaleen and her lover frequently ascended to the summit of the mountain on the side of which lay their last trysting-place. There they were wont to sit for hours, and talk of the wild legends told by the peasantry in connection with that stately mountain. Often, too, John Fitzgerald would tell her stories of the battered old castles that lay beneath, of the bravery of the

sturdy chiefs that held them in the olden time, and the manner in which they fought against the enemy of their native land on many a well-contested field. There was one feature of the scene, however, on which the lovers, particularly at sunset, looked with more delight than on all the others. It was the beautiful range of hills that formed the far southern boundary of the broad plain beneath. One of these hills towered high above its neighbors, in the shape of a smooth green cone, with scattered woods running up its sides, and a solitary rock upon its summit. On a certain evening they were sitting on their usual seat on the summit of the mountain near their home. A gorgeous scene lay before them. The silent plain, the broad river that ran along its northern verge glittering like a stream of gold in the descending sun, and the far circle of surrounding mountains, brought a holy and strange calmness into their young hearts.

“How red and clear!” exclaimed John Fitzgerald, turning towards their favorite point of the prospect: “how bright the sunset falls upon that lonely group of hills!”

“And look,” answered Rosaleen, “at the little rock on the point of the highest hill. It is like one of those ancient altars you tell me of, where the ancient inhabitants worshipped the sun.”

“Yes,” rejoined her lover; “and beneath, how bright it is! Ah! Rosaleen, when in after times death shall steal upon us, how I long that we could

sleep side by side in one of those peaceful and lonely gorges! There the birds would sing day after day their sweet songs, the wild flowers would bloom undisturbed over our grave, and the mountain streams murmur around it joyously forever."

On the evening previous to Rosaleen's disappearance, she had paid a stolen visit to the summit of the mountain from which they viewed that loved scene so often. Casting her eyes to the south, she beheld again that beautiful chain of hills in all their sunset glory. Suddenly it struck her mind that the wish of her lover might have been fulfilled, and that his grave lay in the sunlit gorge he had pointed out on the evening alluded to above.

"It must be so," she exclaimed, as she now quickly descended the mountain. "His grave must be there, and I will go and seek it."

She hurried homeward, and it was noticed by those who attended on her that she appeared on that night in a happier state of mind than usual. Next day, at her usual time of walking, wrapping herself in a large mantle which she occasionally wore, she stole out, and proceeded by an unfrequented path in the direction of the southern chain of hills. And thus it was that she had disappeared from her home.

At the foot of the highest of these hills, there was at that time a small village called Barna. It was completely surrounded by woods, the remains of the ancient forest that once clothed the whole

of that wild and romantic district. At the upper end of this village, there was a green glade in the wood, sloping up the foot of the mountain; and in a level hollow of this glade, beneath a huge sycamore-tree, the villagers were accustomed to sit on holiday evenings, listening to the strain of some wandering musician, or the tale of some ancient *shanachie*, or story-teller. One evening they were all not a little astounded at the sight of a young and beautiful lady, dressed in white, and sitting on the verge of the glade, smiling at them, and watching their merriment. It was poor Rosaleen Weston. How she had reached the place, and how she continued to subsist during her sore and toilsome journey, she was unable during the whole of her after life — and it was a long one — to remember. But there, however, she was, to the no small wonderment of the villagers. First, they thought her a spirit, and were inclined to scatter in consternation to their homes. By degrees, however, their curiosity got the better of their fear. They waited, gazing silently upon her, until at length she rose, came down to the tree, and spoke to them. Then they soon found out what she was, and the sad mental malady into which she had fallen. In that quiet hamlet she lived for nearly a month, and was treated kindly and tenderly by the poor villagers, who soon grew to love her for her simple ways, her beauty, and her artless talk, and more than all, because, as they said, her mind was gone, and that it was their

duty to tend her and guard her well. She had found a green spot amid the wood, which she said was her lover's grave; and day by day she visited it, decked it with flowers, and sang sad songs over it.

One day, about a month after her arrival, she was sitting on the green spot in the wood, weaving a garland of flowers. Suddenly she heard a step behind her, and, on turning round, beheld her lover.

She started to her feet, flew to him, clung fondly around him for a moment, and then dropped down into a long but quiet swoon. When she awoke, John Fitzgerald was bending over her, and sprinkling her brow with water. Strange to say, her mental malady was quite gone; and she now remembered every thing distinctly that had happened previous to that terrible moment her brother had given his fatal and treacherous news on the lawn.

John Fitzgerald had been only slightly wounded at Vinegar Hill. He had, some time after the battle, returned to his native place, where he contrived to evade the officers of the Government.

Hearing of the disappearance of Rosaleen, he had made search for her during many a weary day, and was now rewarded well for his trouble.

"How can we go home?" said Rosaleen. "Ah! John, it was a weary time for me; but I hope we will be parted no more. And yet I fear my father and brother."

"We will not go home," answered her lover. "The priest of this parish is my father's cousin.

He will marry us ; and then we can easily reach France, where I trust to be able to advance myself in the profession I have chosen, — as a soldier.”

They were married ; they contrived to reach France also, and there John Fitzgerald prospered in his profession. About eighteen years afterwards, a carriage drove by the village of Barna, where they still remembered the White Lady. It stopped at the little inn by the wayside. In it were a dark, military-looking gentleman and a lady, who desired that the heads of the different families in the village should come to them. To each they gave a present of money ; for the sake, they said, of the poor young lady that had received such kindly shelter there many years before. Away again rolled the carriage over the great plain, and, stopping only to change horses at an occasional town, at length arrived at the foot of the mountain, and before the gate of old Fitzgerald, who was still living. It was Capt. John Fitzgerald and his lady, the still fair Rosaleen.

At this part of his manuscript, the doctor goes so deeply and profoundly into the analysis of human feelings that it is impossible to follow him in his lucubrations. The reader will easily conceive the joy of old Fitzgerald and his son and daughter-in-law at their meeting after so many years' separation. Rosaleen's father was dead ; and her brother married and flourishing — as if he had never done wrong — upon his ancestral estate. Probably he had repented

of his bad deeds; else, I am sure, the erudite and somewhat irascible doctor would have done him poetic justice in his manuscript. After some time old Fitzgerald also died, and Capt. John succeeded to the estate.

On finishing my notes from this part of the manuscript, the doctor, guessing to what I had arrived, raised his head somewhat, and put back his white hair from his forehead. Still gazing on a page of "The Lancet," however, he said, half to himself and half to me, —

"June 30, 1858, eleven o'clock, P.M., Capt. John Fitzgerald and Rosaleen his wife, cheerfully and without pain, and surrounded by their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, both died — died on the same instant."





THE BRIDAL RING.

A STORY OF CAHIR CASTLE.

THE site on which Cahir Castle is built was formerly a *dun*, or fort, — a structure which was formed of woodwork and earthen embankments. The present castle was founded, it would seem, by one of those bold Norman adventurers who came to our shores in the train of the Earl of Chepstow, or Strongbow, as he was more familiarly called. It stands upon an island rock which divides the waters of the Suir, and, during the several wars that raged in Ireland since the invasion, was always a place of great strength and importance. It belonged, since the beginning of the fourteenth century, to the powerful house of Ormond; for we find it then in possession of James Butler, son of James the third earl, by Catherine, daughter of the Earl of Desmond. During the wars of Elizabeth and those of the succeeding reigns, it changed hands frequently, and stood several gallant sieges, the relation of which would be far too long for the limits of this story.

The ancient Irish name of the town of Cahir was *Cahir duna-iascaigh*; that is, the circular fortress of the fish-abounding fort. One of the incidents connected with the military history of Cahir Castle is told in the following story:—

In a corner of a solitary churchyard some short distance from Cahir, there lies a portion of an ancient tomb, namely, the upper half of a limestone slab, which is now almost completely hidden from the eye of the curious visitor by the rank and luxuriant growth of docks, nettles, and other weeds that clothe the silent dwellings of the dead around. If you raise it up, and rub the moss carefully from its timeworn face, you will be rewarded with the sight of the following portion of an inscription:—

“Heere lieth ye bodye of John de Botiller,
who was shot.

Alsoe ye bodye of his Wife Mary de Botiller,
who died when he died.

Their youthe was Love,
Their courtshippe was Love,
Their marriage-daie was Love,
Their wedded life was Love,
Their deathe was Love,
And ——”

What the remaining portion of the inscription was will most probably remain unknown forever; for the fracture occurs at the word “And,” while the other half of the slab is lost. Many an hour’s toil the search for that lost fragment of sculptured lime-

stone cost us: but it was all of no avail; and the history of the personages whom the above quaint words commemorate would perhaps have remained in obscurity till the end of time, were it not that we happened, some years ago, to meet Brian Tiernay, of Templetenny, as fine and jovial and stalwarth, and withal as venerable, a specimen of a *senachie*, or story-teller, as you would find within the four seas of old Ireland. Brian Tiernay's relation is far too long to come within the limits of such a short tale as this must necessarily be. Stripping it, therefore, of some of its ornate flourishes, and a great number of incidental episodes, we shall proceed to relate the thread of the story according to his version.

About a mile or so to the south-east of Cahir Castle, there stood, on a high crag over the Suir, a square tower, or peel-house as they would call it in Scotland; which tower was for a long time the dwelling of Walter Ridensford, an ancient retainer of the great house of Ormond. The tower was one of a chain of similar buildings, which, with their high bawn walls and strong gates, stood at the distance of a few miles from one another towards the south and west, in a semicircle beyond the great border fortress of Cahir, and acted as advanced posts through which an enemy would have to pierce before he could attack the strongly-situated central castle. The tower to which we allude was called Tig-na-Sgiath, or the House of the Shield, from a rude representation of that defensive appurtenance of a warrior,

which was sculptured over the sturdy archway that led into the bawn. It was a strong place, and especially so during the time it was occupied by the brave old castellan whom we have named above.

Walter Ridensford, or Wattie Stem-the-Stream, as he was called along the borders, — by which we mean that strip of debatable land which lay between the territories of the two great and rival houses of Ormond and Desmond, — was one of the most eccentric men that ever struck morion on head to follow the banner of his master on fray or foray. At the time of our story, he had attained to that respectable age which generally precludes a man from engaging in the rough and dangerous occupations of war. But time seemed to have had but little effect upon the iron frame and hardy spirit of Wattie-Stem-the-Stream; for he was still one of the most quarrelsome, and at the same time most formidable, of all those retainers of the house of Ormond who inhabited that dangerous and troublesome district lying along the south-western banks of the Suir. Many a single combat he had fought, and many a foray he had ridden, in every one of which, by some good chance or other, he had been successful; and this, we need not say, caused him to be regarded as a personage of no small consequence by the various seneschals, castellans, and other people of note and authority for many a mile round. Wattie had married late in life; and his wife, dying soon after, left behind her an only daughter, who was dear as the

apple of his eye to the old warrior, and who, about the period at which our story commences, was nearly seventeen years of age.

Mary Ridensford was a beautiful and gentle girl; and, when we say that much of her, it is enough to indicate the fact that her hand was sought in marriage by many a young cavalier of the borders. But to all those, when they ventured to speak upon such a delicate subject to Wattie Stem-the-Stream, that grim old warrior made the rather ambiguous answer, that no one but the best man in Ormond would get his daughter for a wife. This oracular response, it seems, instead of decreasing, added considerably to the number of young Mary Ridensford's suitors. There was Gibbon of the Wood, from the banks of Funcheon, who looked upon her with a loving eye, and who gave it out that he would cheerfully do battle with sword and axe — if that was the meaning of old Wattie Stem-the-Stream's answer — against any competitor for the lady's hand; there was Donat Burke of Ruscoe, who swore, that, as he had lost his heart, he did not care a straw about losing his head for her sake; there was Raimond Grace, of Burnfort, who made oath to his confidential friend, that, along with putting his heart's blood in jeopardy for the sake of gaining her affections, he would willingly throw his lands and castle into the bargain; and there was a host of others. But the rivalry at last seemed hottest between Gibbon of the Wood and the young castellan of Cnoc Graffon, whose

name was John de Botiller, or Butler, and who, besides being a distant cousin of the Earl of Ormond, was also accounted the boldest horseman of the border, and the best and truest hand at sword-play, pistol-mark, or deft tricks of dagger in time of war, and also in every athletic amusement on festival days on village green and by fairy well. One day John de Botiller received intimation from one of his daltins, or horseboys, that Gibbon of the Wood had just paid a visit, on matrimonial subjects intent, to the House of the Shield. This information was not, of course, very welcome to the young and fiery castellan of Cnoc Graffon. With a dark brow he began revolving the subject in his mind, and at last took his horse, and rode away for the purpose of paying a similar visit to Wattie Stem-the-Stream. He found that worthy sitting by his castle-gate, grimly contemplating a certain pass in the far-off range of mountains, where, once upon a time, he had the satisfaction of seeing a detachment of the Desmond soldiers cut to pieces by the followers of his ancient lord and master, Thomas the Black, Earl of Ormond. Now, the young castellan of Cnoc Graffon knew well the kind of man he had to deal with, and proceeded at once to business, with an abruptness and candor wofully contrasting with the match-making chicanery and matrimonial circumlocutions of more modern times.

"Wat Ridensford," said he, on receiving the curt but hearty welcome of the old man, "you know me

since I was a child. I have nothing but my castle and a few acres around it,—nothing else but my sword to help me on through the world: will you give me your daughter for a wife?”

“That I cannot tell,” answered the phlegmatic Wattie. “I have often said that the best and bravest man in Ormond only should get her. What do you say to that?”

“Nothing,” answered John de Botiller, “nothing, only that I cannot understand it. I tell you what I have heard, that Gibbon of the Wood was here to-day. To him, I suppose, you have given the same answer; but know, Wattie Stem-the-Stream, that as I have come — yes, come here for, I believe, the twelfth time, I am determined not to be put off with a riddle any longer.” It was now he showed his knowledge of Wattie’s character. “You must tell me what you mean,” continued he. “If you do not, here is a level space before us; draw your sword, and you will soon see, that, if you were twice as good a man as you are, I’ll whip the answer in a trice out of that old iron carcass of yours. Draw.”

This was exactly what Wattie wanted, and what he was for a long time expecting from some one of the suitors for his daughter’s hand. He now quietly stood up, and drew the heavy sword he usually carried by his side. With a grim smile of mingled approval and affection, he looked upon the splendid figure of the young castellan of Cnoc Graffon, as the

latter stood opposite him, also with his drawn sword in hand, ready to begin the strange combat.

"The answer, the answer!" cried John de Botiller.

"Take that, instead," answered Wattie, making a playful cut of his sword at the young castellan, which, however, the latter avoided by a nimble bound in a backward direction. A sharp combat, half play, half earnest, ensued; the result of which was, that Wattie was at last beaten back against the wall by his young antagonist.

"Yield, Wattie! yield, and give the answer!" exclaimed John de Botiller, as the old man planted his back against the wall, and stood warily on his defence. "Yield, yield!" continued he, dancing nimbly round, and making various playful lunges and slashes at the old man, at which the latter at length burst into a hearty and sonorous fit of laughter, and dropped the point of his sword with a mock grimace on his swarthy old countenance, in token of submission.

"The answer you shall have, by my father's head!" exclaimed Wattie, as he now planted himself upon the stone seat by the gateway, and invited the young horseman to take a seat beside him. "Here it is," continued he. "I have sworn that none but the best man in Ormond shall get my daughter for a wife; and you may be sure that Wattie Ridensford is not the man to break his oath. I will appoint a day on which the suitors can come

to Tig-na-Sgiath, and try their prowess at every kind of exercise. On that day, if you come, you will get your chance; and, between us both," continued he, grasping the hand of the young castellan, and giving it a tremendous squeeze, "I wish you success; so, whatever happens by flood or field, be here on the day appointed."

"It is enough," said John de Botiller, returning the friendly grasp of the old soldier. "I will be here; and, with Mary looking on me from the castle window, I hope to acquit myself so that I shall come off the winner of her fair hand."

With that he bade farewell to old Wattie, and rode away to Cnoc Graffon. This occurred on the evening of May-day; but, ere a fortnight was over, there was a storm raised in the land, which left but little time to the wooers of young Mary Ridensford to think on the day of trial, whatever time it might occur. The Earl of Essex had marched southwards, and laid siege to Cahir Castle. After several sallies and skirmishes between the belligerents, and a terrible cannonade from the batteries of Essex, the latter at length succeeded in taking possession of the fortress. Leaving a garrison behind him, he then marched into Desmond, fighting various battles as he proceeded. Throughout the whole siege, John de Botiller and all the young men of the neighborhood were, of course, employed in defending the castle; but now, when all was over, they began to think of the strange resolution the old

Master of Tig-na-Sgiath had come to with regard to the disposal of the hand of his daughter. They so importuned Wattie, that he at last fixed a day; and now, without the slightest consideration for the feelings of his daughter, although he loved her well, he awaited its coming; thinking, of course, that the bravest soldier and most active man in the country, whoever he was, would make the best and fondest husband for Mary. But the latter did not agree with her father's notions on the matter. She loved the handsome young castellan of Cnoc-Graffon, and was resolved to marry no one else, whoever the successful competitor might be on Midsummer Day; for that was the one appointed by Wattie for the trial between her wooers. Many an hour she sat and wept in her little chamber in the House of the Shield, thinking of the dangerous position she was in; and what must have been her grief and terror, when at last Midsummer Day came, and, though a numerous throng of competitors had arrived at the castle, there was still no appearance of John de Botiller! The latter, however, was a score of miles away at the time, acting as officer of the guard at Carrick Castle, where military discipline was enforced with such strictness that he did not dare to leave his post during the temporary absence of Lord Ormond.

Meanwhile the trial between the wooers at the House of the Shield went on gloriously, Wattie Stem-the-Stream wondering from time to time at

the continued absence of the young castellan of Cnoc Graffon, whose suit he favored secretly. Several competitors had given in, as the day advanced; and, before noon was over, the contest, in every athletic trial, lay principally between Gibbon of the Wood, Donat Burke of Ruscoe, and Raymond Grace, the young Lord of Burnfort. Poor Donat Burke at last nearly fractured his knee, at the leaping of the bawn wall, and gave up the contest; so that, to all appearance, the hand of Mary Ridensford was destined in a short time to fall to the lot of either Raymond Grace or the sturdy Gibbon of the Wood, both of whom were engaged at a terrible bout of wrestling on the level bawn. At length Raymond went down; and, notwithstanding his various threats, that he would peril life and lands to gain the hand of Mary Ridensford, and a gratuitous one to the effect that he would have the heart's blood of any other man that would succeed in winning it, he very philosophically gave in at the proposal of the next and final trial, which was to be a deadly bout between himself and the formidable Gibbon, with broadsword, buckler, and skean.

And now Gibbon of the Wood boldly claimed the hand of poor Mary, who was at the moment, with bitter tears in her eyes, looking over the sloping plain beyond the Suir, expecting her lover to make his appearance. And he did appear at last, just as the fatal words were about being spoken by her father, that would make her the affianced wife of the

dreaded Gibbon. Lord Ormond had returned to Carrick early that morning; and, when he heard the story from the young castellan of Cnoc Graffon, he laughed heartily, and gave the latter liberty to set off as fast as his good steed would carry him for the House of the Shield. There John de Botiller arrived at the time we have indicated; and a terrible contest commenced between him and the now enraged Gibbon, who did not give in till he had lost the two best fingers of his right hand, in the last trial with skean and broadsword.

And so John de Botiller won the hand of the lovely Mary Ridensford, and they were wedded shortly afterwards. But there were tears in her eyes soon after the marriage; for, two days afterwards, her young husband was forced to bid her farewell, and, with as many men as he could muster, return to the banner of Lord Ormond, the eastern borders of whose territory were at the time in a state of war and trouble and continual tumult. Many a weary moon passed over poor Mary, as she sat in the turret window of her father's house, looking out over the wide plains for the return of her gallant husband; but he came not, for he was still taking part in the raids of Lord Ormond, on the far-off eastern borders. Many a time she looked upon her marriage-ring, and bathed it with tears, as she thought of the day on which John de Botiller had placed it on her finger.

And now the south-western borders began to

come in for their share of the troubles. Wattie Stem-the-Stream and the other castellans of the neighborhood rose with their followers, and fell upon Cahir Castle; but, after a sharp contest with the garrison left behind by Essex, they were forced to retire from its walls. In consequence of this attack, the President of Munster sent Sir John Dowdall, a veteran soldier of the Queen, across the mountains from Youghal, to quiet the borders, and place a fresh garrison in Cahir Castle. Sir John executed his commission with a high and successful hand. He not only succeeded in throwing in the garrison, but he also laid siege to and took the whole chain of border towers, one after the other, — the stronghold of Tig-na-Sgiath included. It was thus that on a certain fine day the belligerent and dauntless Wattie found himself and his daughter, the young and sad wife of the castellan of Cnoc Graffon, close prisoners in the mighty, and at the time almost impregnable, fortress of Cahir. The father fretted and fumed at being thus rendered inactive, when so much was still to be done outside; but the daughter sat quietly in her lonely prison, and, looking on her bridal ring, day after day, still bathed it with many a bitter tear, as she thought of the grief her absent husband would feel when he heard of their woful state.

It is not to be supposed that the young castellan of Cnoc Graffon remained quiet when a secret messenger from the stout Wattie bore him the

news. He immediately proceeded to James Galdie, the Earl of Ormond's brother, and with him concocted a plan for the capturing of the Castle of Cahir. At the head of about sixty chosen men, they marched across the country, and, without attracting the observation of the garrison, contrived to ensconce themselves opposite the walls of the castle, just as the shadows of night loomed down darkly upon plain and glen from the adjacent summits of the Gaulty Mountains. They had brought with them a number of ladders; and, having crossed the drawbridge, in the dead silence of the night they began scaling the inner wall. Ere a dozen of them had gained the bawn inside, the garrison was aroused, and rushing out, sword and gun in hand, under Thomas Quayle, the castellan, a short and sharp struggle commenced between the two parties. Wattie Stem-the-Stream and his daughter were soon awakened in their prison chambers by the loud clashing of swords and the rattling of guns and petronels outside. And now the loud crash of a falconet, or small cannon, resounded from a tower overhead, followed by a strange, fearful, and rustling noise that seemed to tear the rocky walls of the prison chamber asunder, after which the young bride sat pale and terror-stricken for a moment, and then gave one wild and heart-piercing cry of anguish and despair.

"The ring! the ring!" she cried, holding out her hand towards her startled father. "Ah, me! ah,

me! it is broken; and I know but too well that my noble husband is slain."

The father took the trembling hand in his; and, examining the bridal ring, found it cracked asunder, and almost falling off the finger of the poor young bride. Still the uproar continued outside, but in a short time it ceased. The prison door at length opened, and James Galdie and a few men strode into the chamber with the news that they had taken the castle. At the moment the door was opened, Mary, with another wild cry, rushed out; and, when they searched for her a few moments afterwards, they found her by the wall, stretched beside the dead body of her gallant husband, who had fallen beneath the cannon-ball from the tower above. They raised her; but she too was dead, and when they took her lily-white hand, and looked upon the ring, they found it whole and sound as ever, — a mysterious sign of her being reunited to her husband in the bridal of death. They were laid side by side in the little churchyard; and many a traveller, as the seasons come and go, sits there and muses sadly over the last resting-place of the brave John de Botiller and his loving wife.





THE LITTLE BATTLE OF BOTTLE HILL.

“ Saddled and bridled
And booted rade he ;
Toom * hame came the saddle,
But never came he ! ”

A MIDST the wild tract of country lying between Cork and Mallow rises Bottle Hill, remarkable only for its barrenness, and for a fight that took place there between the partisans of King James and King William. The following is the traditional account of that fight.

At the foot of Bottle Hill might be seen, some few years ago, a spot conspicuous for its greenness amidst the surrounding heath and shingle. Traces of the foundations of buildings might then be observed over its unequal surface. Now the heath has encroached upon it, so that it is scarcely distinguishable, except by a few stunted hazel-bushes, from the

* Empty.

general surface of the barren and broken moorland around. On this spot once stood the strongly fortified house of Master Grimshaw Stubbles, son of the stout and godly Ephraim Stubbles, one of the victorious Undertakers, who settled down in the country to enjoy the conquests of their bows and spears, after the termination of the disastrous wars of Cromwell.

Master Grimshaw proved himself a worthy successor to his father, when that sanctified and redoubtable hero condescended to look his last on the broad domain he had won by his conjoint labors as drummer and expounder of the Word in one of the Great Protector's regiments of cavalry. As a consequence of the desolation caused by the Cromwellian wars, the wolf still prowled almost unmolested over the barren moorlands and woody fastnesses of the neighborhood. Ephraim amused himself occasionally by a hunt after one of these fierce animals; but his propensities as a Nimrod were often gratified in a more bloody manner, — namely, in chasing with sleuthhound and horn the unfortunate men who some years before had met him face to face bravely in battle, but who now, reduced to outlaws and Raparees, broken-hearted and despoiled, tried to gain a subsistence, as best they could, amidst the sterility of the wild region above-mentioned.

At the end of such a hunt, and when the poor human game was at last run down and captured, not one of all the followers of old Ephraim Stubbles had such

a deft and masterly hand as his son at tying the hangman's noose, and adjusting the fatal cord by which they generally suspended the body of their tortured victim to the branch of some neighboring tree. It will not therefore be thought wonderful, when, at the end of the reign of Charles the Second, his father died, and when a slight change came over the management of affairs under the authority of King James, that, with such training in his youth, Master Grimshaw Stubbles, in the prime of life, should long for another ruler of the land and for a return of the old license.

Master Grimshaw had not long to wait. After a reign that brought more trouble and disaster to Ireland than any of the preceding ones, King James fled to France; and the south was occupied by the victorious armies of William, who was just beginning the memorable siege of Limerick. Then it was that the Undertakers rose rampant and furious from under the weak restrictions that had been imposed upon them during the rule of the preceding Stuarts. The hunting horns rang amidst the woods, and the sleuthhounds were let loose once more; and many a brave peasant, who had fought and bled in the cause of the worthless Stuart, met his cruel fate after the chase, under the hands of his triumphant and ruthless foes.

The lands now held by Master Grimshaw formerly belonged to Donal MacCarthy, a gentleman distantly related to the Earl of Glencar, and who,

like his more powerful relative, had fought in the cause of Charles the First against the Parliamentarians. Driven from his home, Donal retired to the woods with his wife and only son, and the few dependents who were faithful enough to share his broken fortunes. Here, season after season, he fell deeper into misery; his followers died, or left him to eke out their own miserable subsistence in other parts of the country, but not before they had aided him in driving off two preys of cattle from the lands of Ephraim Stubbles. He was outlawed, of course; so that any man who wished might legally kill him, and get a reasonable reward for his head.

At last the indefatigable Ephraim Stubbles ferreted out Donal's retreat in the woods, surrounded the wretched hut early one morning with his confederates and followers, dragged out the poor old gentleman and his wife, and shot them at their own door. Young Donal Riagh, or the Swarthy, their son, would have shared the same fate as his parents, were it not that he was saved by a merciful and jolly old Roundhead magistrate, who, instead of the draughts of the Word he had drunk so deep of in his youth, had taken in his latter days to jovial stoups of Schiedam and foaming tankards of October ale.

With the memory of his parents' fate for ever in his mind, it was no wonder that Donal Riagh, as he grew up, hated with his whole heart the son of their murderer. By his daring exploits against the Wil-

liamites, and by his hereditary influence amongst the people of the surrounding country, he had become the leader of a numerous band of Rapparees, by whose aid he was now planning to pay back the debt he owed to Master Grimshaw Stubbles. On the other hand, Grimshaw was by no means idle, and with his followers, and an occasional troop of dragoons from Mallow, scoured the woods several times in search of his mortal foe. And thus matters stood between the two on a fine sunny morning in the beginning of August, 1690.

Grimshaw, accoutred in morion and corselet and the other warlike habiliments of his defunct father, was mounted outside his own gate. Around him were grouped several other horsemen, — namely, two or three officers from the garrison of Mallow, who had come all the way over to see the sport; about a dozen other landholders of his own stamp, amongst whom might be seen Adam Blundel, the jolly old toper who had saved the life of Donal Riagh; dependents, horse and foot, armed to the teeth, and ready for any cruelty, however atrocious; while behind, under the archway of the gate, stood a man, with a leathern leash in his hand, holding in check a brace of strapping, tawny bloodhounds.

“By my soul!” — said old Adam Blundel, who had long done away with the sanctimonious twang with which he was wont to garnish his words in the days of Cromwell — “by my soul, and by the hand of Oliver! but I little thought that the boy whose life I

saved twenty years ago should come to this, — that he should be chased, caught, and strung up, as he will, I fear, before the day is over.”

“You fear?” remarked Grimshaw Stubbles, with a fierce and dissatisfied look: “what a tender heart you have got, Master Blundel!”

“I tell you what it is, Grimshaw,” retorted the old toper, “from your father the drummer, up to Oliver the general, there was not a man in the army that had a harder heart than mine while I was filled with the Spirit; but” —

“But since you have taken to filling yourself with another kind of spirit,” interrupted one of Adam’s ancient bottle-companions, with a grim smile, “your heart is softening to mankind in general, especially to this damned Rapparee, Donal Riagh.”

“Yes,” remarked another, “we’ll soon have him petitioning King William, I suppose, for the Rapparee’s pardon, and for the lives of his followers, who harry our lands worse than their brothers, the wolves.”

“Donal Riagh has never done harm to me or mine,” returned the honest and blunt old magistrate, “and why should I pursue him to the death? I have come here to-day to prevent unnecessary bloodshed; and yet, as for Donal Riagh, I fear he must die at last, else there can be no peace in the country. Master Grimshaw here, however, knows that Donal has suffered enough wrong to drive a wiser man mad.”

“Die!” exclaimed Grimshaw, unheeding the latter part of Old Blundel’s remark, “ay, if he had twenty lives; and, if we catch him, he shall die to-day. But see, by heaven, Blundel! but the Lord has delivered the rebel dog into our hands without trouble. For look yonder!” And he pointed towards a little wood, something more than a furlong in front of the house.

Blundel looked in the direction indicated; but his eyes were none of the best, and he could barely distinguish the figure of a man leaning against a tree. Not so with the eyes of Master Grimshaw, which were rendered doubly sharp by hate.

“Look, gentlemen all,” continued he, “for there he stands yonder, alone and unarmed; for what purpose, I know not. I suppose the Lord hath blinded him, so that he comes to us to sue for mercy, and imagines he shall obtain it. Unslip the hounds, Wattie; and away, gentlemen! It is a pleasure we can hunt at sight.” And, with that, he threw his bridle loose, gave his horse the spur, and dashed off in the direction of the wood, followed by the others.

But Grimshaw Stubbles little knew the daring and subtle man he had to deal with. The moment he had given his horse the spur, Donal Riagh disappeared from beneath the tree, and darted through the wood; so that by the time his pursuers had gained the outskirts next the house he was at the opposite side, and running away with extraordinary

swiftness over the sloping moorland that extended beyond. At the other side of this moorland, the country became rough and woody; and towards this wild fastness Donal Riagh was flying at full speed, when the two bloodhounds, with horse and foot behind them, burst with wild clamor from the copse, and stretched out eagerly and fiercely upon his track.

The moorland was soon crossed, and Donal disappeared in the ragged and stunted wood that skirted its opposite side. As he pushed onward, the wood, however, became denser, the trees more large and lofty, and the glens by which it was intersected more difficult and dangerous. Now and then his pursuers caught sight of him as he crossed some broken glade, but that was all. They continued, however, unerringly upon his track; for they had only to follow the two bloodhounds that were all the while making the woody dells resound with their fierce baying. But Donal Riagh took it all very unconcernedly, pushing on and on, and drawing his pursuers deeper and deeper into the intricacies of that wild forest, with every foot of which he was so well acquainted.

After about an hour's chase, he plunged into a deep and wooded gorge, through the bottom of which a broken bridle-path led in through the innermost depths of the forest. Midway in this lonely ravine, he turned round a boulder of rock, plunged into the thick underwood that clothed its

rugged side, and disappeared, just as the bloodhounds came about a hundred yards behind, making the whole forest ring with their loud and triumphant howling. On they came, their black noses scattering the fresh dew from the morning grass, till, just as they reached the crag around which Donal Riagh had turned, two stalwart young Rapparees darted out from the thicket, and pinned them to the ground with their light spears. A moment after, Grimshaw Stubbles and his followers dashed up the gorge, and halted beside the writhing bodies of the two luckless bloodhounds. Then came the loud pattering of petronel and musketoon from both sides of the gorge, and Donal Riagh and his vengeful Rapparees, with a wild and thrilling shout, rushed down upon the unfortunate Tory hunter and his comrades.

Let us now return to the house of Grimshaw Stubbles. Scarcely had that worthy and his confreres disappeared under the shades of the forest beyond the moorland, when a body of men, about forty in number, and led by Theige MacDonogh, Donal's lieutenant, rushed out from the little wood above mentioned, darted in through the open gateway, fell upon the scanty guard left behind, slew them to a man, and took possession of the house. After the proper military arrangements were made by Theige MacDonogh, — who, by the way, had served as a cornet under King James, at the Battle of the Boyne, — the sentinel who stood guard at the gate-

way saw a horse tearing madly up the moorland and around the little wood, which his practised eye recognized instantly as that belonging to Master Grimshaw Stubbles. The fate of its master and most of his comrades in the wild forest-gorge may easily be guessed.

About the same moment, two horsemen might be seen riding at full speed, and in different directions from the fatal gorge. One was the jovial old toper, Adam Blundel, whose life had been, as a matter of course, spared by Donal Riagh; the other was one of the officers from Mallow, who had escaped, and who was riding now towards that town at his topmost speed, to bring out as many of the cavalry of the garrison as he could to the scene of the wild and fatal onslaught of the morning.

On the evening of that day, two troops of Williamite dragoons wound up the sylvan valley of the Clydagh from Mallow, crossed by the little wood in front of Grimshaw's house, formed in line, and halted at the foot of Bottle Hill. A trumpeter was sent forward, after a slight delay, who rode directly onward to the front gate, and summoned the Rapparees to surrender without conditions. The garrison was now, however, strengthened by Donal Riagh and his followers, so that it somewhat outnumbered the Williamite force sent against it. The answer returned to the trumpeter, therefore, may be easily imagined. He rode back with a refusal, of course, to report it to his commander.

Scarcely had the trumpeter reached the line, when a Rapparee horseman, with a white handkerchief on the point of his sword, dashed out from the gateway, and approached within talking distance of the Williamites.

"Our captain, the brave Donal Riagh MacCarthy, sent me forward," said he, addressing the officer who appeared to command the English dragoons, "to know how many sabres ye be to a man?"

"A very modest inquiry, indeed," exclaimed the Williamite captain, laughing. "May I ask, however, before I answer, for what purpose does your master ask the question?"

"For this," answered the Rapparee: "that for every sabre you have, Donal Riagh is willing to tell out the same number on this nice moorland, and then let both sides see it out, man to man, on horseback or on foot, before the sun sets beyond Mount Hillary."

"I have a hundred men besides myself and the three officers you see yonder," returned the English captain, delighted at the proposal. "Go back and tell your chief, or whatever he is, that I am happy to accede to what he proposes; that man and horse, I and my officers and my hundred men, will fight him and his officers and an equal number. Such, I believe, are the conditions. Stay for a moment," continued he with a sneer; "tell your captain that he may add fifty more to his number. We shall fight them, if they come out from their stone walls."

The messenger went off at a brisk gallop, and soon rode in through the guarded gateway.

Most of the men under Donal Riagh, as well as Donal himself, had served in the cavalry of King James; so, after being disbanded for a time subsequent to the Battle of the Boyne, each, on his coming home, had taken care, along with keeping his arms and accoutrements, which he was allowed to do by his commanders, to provide himself also with a horse. And thus it happened that the deliberations of the English were soon disturbed by the martial strain of a cavalry trumpet, and immediately afterwards Donal Riagh was seen riding forth from the gate of Grimshaw Stubbles's house at the head of a hundred horsemen, with Theige MacDonogh and two other subordinate commanders by his side. The English trumpeter now sounded forth his challenge in return; and, in a few moments, the men on both sides sat their horses opposite one another, expecting the command to charge. It came; and then followed the thundering rush across the dry spot of moorland that lay between the belligerents, the crash of both lines as they closed in the deadly conflict, and, soon after, the victorious shouts of the brave Rapparees, as the English, massing themselves together as closely as they could, began to retreat slowly over the hills, leaving about twenty of their number behind upon the field. After losing about half-a-dozen more of his men, the Williamite captain, who, all through the fight, showed himself a

man of much judgment and mettle, at last succeeded in making his retreat into Mallow. On the side of the Rapparees about a dozen men fell. The horses and trappings of the slain dragoons were, however, an important addition to the armament of the gallant and victorious Donal Riagh MacCarthy, who, in the war that followed, became one of the most celebrated and successful Rapparee leaders in the south of Ireland.

Thus ended what we have called, at the head of this paper, the little battle of Bottle Hill. The story, though traditional, and though perhaps its details on that account cannot be strictly relied upon, is still instructive, showing, as it does, how the Irish peasantry, when properly prepared, and acting in concert under a brave and skilful leader like Donal Riagh, can fight, and win even, on a fair field and man to man, against English or any other troops, no matter how high the valor and perfect the discipline of the latter.



